

*STUDIES IN  
METHODIST  
LITERATURE*

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STUDIES IN METHODIST LITERATURE



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BY

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**To**

The noble Christian woman who, through all the years of my  
ministry, has heroically shared my trials and has  
largely contributed to my triumphs

**Wizzie Burran**

This book is affectionately dedicated



# CONTENTS.



	PAGE.
FOREWORD .....	9
INTRODUCTION .....	II
CHAPTER I.	
The Literary View of Life.....	15
CHAPTER II.	
The Writings of Wesley.....	25
CHAPTER III.	
The Writings of Wesley (Continued).....	39
CHAPTER IV.	
The Lyrics of Methodism.....	53
CHAPTER V.	
Pulpit Oratory .....	67
CHAPTER VI.	
Biblical Literature .....	79
CHAPTER VII.	
Theological Literature .....	93
CHAPTER VIII.	
Biographical Literature .....	107
CHAPTER IX.	
Historical Literature .....	121
CHAPTER X.	
Methodist Metaphysicians .....	135
CHAPTER XI.	
The Journal of Francis Asbury.....	149
CHAPTER XII.	
Miscellaneous Writings .....	163



## FOREWORD.

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A FEW years ago, while preparing an address for the anniversary of the Historical Society of the South Carolina Conference, I came upon this hitherto undiscovered field so rich and ripe. In the midst of growing pastoral duties since that time I have occasionally slipped over into the field and gathered a few sheaves. These will indicate the golden harvest that awaits the reaper who has the time and disposition to enter in.

It is difficult to realize that the early Methodists, whose supreme business was the evangelization of the masses, and with such limited time and meager facilities at their command, were able to make such valuable contributions to the literature of the world.

Indeed, we are the heirs of a glorious inheritance. We are the beneficiaries of a great past. Shall we become the benefactors of a greater future?

WATSON BOONE DUNCAN.

ORANGEBURG, S. C., 1914.



## INTRODUCTION.

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METHODISM in its origin and influence was something more than the ecclesiastical organization that carries its name to the ends of the world and whose membership now constitutes the largest Protestant religious body on the globe. It was also something more than a conflagration of religious enthusiasm that in the eighteenth century swept over the masses of the English-speaking peoples, only to die down with the passing of the winds of emotion that fanned it stormily into flame. It was a movement as deep as the moral life of men, as broad as their conduct in all human relationships, and answering the needs of their fundamental religious faith and personal religious experience.

John Wesley and his associates faced a society of decadent moral standards and shamelessly lax moral conduct, a political condition malodorously rotten, with every form of corruption and sunken into a stagnation that was unruffled by any breeze of civic idealism, an established Church complacently blind to its high mission and itself soiled deeply with the general corruption of the age, and a philosophy that either rationalized God out of life or made him but a thin abstraction, in either case appealing to no human sense of divine responsibility and exercising no controlling influence on conduct. But this was not all. John Wesley also faced a new force, a force in the political world not unlike the force in the religious world which he was releasing—the force called democracy. The people, the masses, out of their poverty, misery, and oppression, were coming to a consciousness of their privileges, their rights, their power. They were getting ready to use their power in forcing political institutions to assure to them their

rights and privileges as men. Across the seas in the New World the struggle to this end creates the American Republic; over in France the story is written in the terror of the Revolution; while in England the Wesleyan movement steadies the progress of democracy by putting a fresh faith and a new hope in the heart of the masses, and society goes forward by the orderly processes of reform rather than through the violent measures of revolution.

This statement of the relation of the Wesleyan movement to the great democratic movement at once emphasizes for us the conception that it was something more than the founding of an ecclesiastical organization. It was a great and far-reaching historical movement, with personal religion as the energizing and guiding force. It brought to men a new sense of the hideousness of sin and of the beauty of holiness and made God, faith, salvation, personal responsibility, striving after righteousness, the witness of the Spirit of Christ the simple, impregnable realities of actual, individual experience. These suggest the forces that transformed English society by stirring it to its depths with the power of a vital religion and sent, as the historian Green says, a new moral energy pulsing through English life. The forces of Methodism also crossed the Atlantic, entered into the foundation of the new republic, went with the pioneer in each successive movement of population westward, and gave to expanding American society a moral tone which survives to this day.

Out of such a movement, so vital, so far-reaching, so rich in romantic color, so epic in heroic adventures, and so marvelously impressive in personal and collective experience, it is but natural that there should develop a varied literature of thought and feeling. And this is what actually happened. With the passage of time, as the Wesleyan movement shaped and organized itself into the Methodist Church, every phase of its life found expression in some form of



literature—poetry, essay, diary, biography, oratory, history, philosophy, or theology. Its founder, though a flaming apostle of righteousness and an ecclesiastical statesman of the highest order, was himself a man of the widest intellectual interests, a man of letters with the gift of a wonderfully simple, forthright style. He was a prolific maker of books; and his associates and followers, lighting their torches from his, have not let the meaning of Methodist thought and history and experience be shadowed in darkness for want of interpreters.

It is the noble record of the expression of the Methodist movement in literature that Dr. Duncan has given in the present volume. And he has done an exceedingly important piece of work in a clear, readable, brief, yet comprehensive way. It is conveniently arranged in chapters, the headings of which naturally suggest the range and variety of our Methodist literature—"The Writings of John Wesley," "The Lyrics of Methodism," "Pulpit Oratory," "Biblical Literature," "Historical Literature," "Methodist Metaphysicians." Such headings give the plan of the book and suggest the rich field that has been opened up. No one can know the meaning of Methodism without also knowing the writings of John Wesley. Methodism has ever been a singing religion, and has consequently given to the world some of its most precious lyrics of faith and experience. The truth it preached has stirred men of supreme endowment to spoken utterance of marvelous power, and its literature is rich in rare oratorical achievement from every standard of measurement. It has always based its faith upon the pure word of God, and has drawn to Biblical interpretation and comment an exceptional company of trained scholars. Its creed, with all its simplicity, has been profound enough to attract to its exposition theologians and philosophers of high rank and equipment, and the moving stories of its heroes and of its own development and spread have been

put to record by capable and sympathetic pens. And in making it possible to appreciate these varied phases of Methodist literary history and expression Dr. Duncan is rendering a distinctly valuable service to all who are concerned with the real significance of the Methodist movement.

HENRY N. SNYDER.

WOFFORD COLLEGE, October 4, 1913.

CHAPTER I.  
THE LITERARY VIEW OF LIFE.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE LITERARY VIEW OF LIFE.

LIFE is many-sided, and our conception of it depends upon the viewpoint from which we take our bearings. To the traveler life is a journey. Indeed, a journey requiring time and effort and patience and fraught with dangers seen and unseen to us illustrates life. And the different experiences of life are beautifully symbolized by the varieties of scenery upon which the eye of the traveler gazes. At times the pathway leads over smooth roads and fragrant landscapes; at others it leads over rough and thorny roads and up rugged mountain sides where often the feet are bruised by the stones.

To the business man life is a great enterprise in which we toil and bend our energies for success. Constant application, concentration of all our energies, and eternal vigilance are the price of victory. He will tell you that the more we put into life, the more we get out of it.

To the lawyer life is a great tribunal in which men are ever subjected to the most scrutinizing examination at the bar of conscience and public opinion.

To the physician life is a continual struggle between health and disease, with the powers of life and the powers of death, in which the odds are against us and in which we finally become victims, falling in apparent defeat.

To the manufacturer life is the development and refinement of raw material or the adjustment of material for service. He tells us that men have learned by experience that it pays to use only the best.

To the athlete life appears as a contest. It becomes a struggle for mastery or a race in which the runner must divest himself of every impediment and bend every muscle in order to win.

To the soldier life takes the form of a battle. In fact, every man's heart is a battle field and every life a campaign. No one is exempt. As soon as we are born the forces of good and evil are marshaled in deadly struggle for supremacy. They pitch their tents on the pure white field of infant character. Their fiercest struggle is brought on in youth, when the victory is largely determined for one or the other. But there is no discharge in this war. It is either ignominy and defeat or glorious victory.

To the sailor life is a voyage. This is one of the most graphic illustrations of life. Loosing the ropes and lifting the gangway represent entrance upon our existence here. The peaceful sail in the placid waters of the harbor is like the joyous days of childhood, when there are no clouds, but all is sunshine and music. Crossing the bar is the critical period of youth, when we are breaking away from home ties, when familiar and deeply cherished things pass out of vision, and we enter upon the real voyage. Here the clouds are to gather above us, while the thunder rolls in successive peals over the mighty deep and the vivid lightning writes the divine autograph upon the dark sky, while the huge billows chase each other in wild fury, at one moment lifting us to mountain heights, at another letting us down to the depths. Storm and calm, light and darkness, sunshine and shadow alternate until the voyage is ended. After a while some one cries, "Land, ho!" and we cast anchor on the other shore. This idea of life is beautifully expressed in Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar":

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea.  
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark;  
For, though from out our bourne of time and place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.

But to the student of literature life becomes a book. Richard Grove (1652) said: "Man is like a book. His birth is the title-page to the book; his baptism is the epistle dedicatory; his groans and crying are the epistle to the reader; his infancy and childhood are the table of contents of the whole ensuing treatise; his life and actions are the subject matter of the book; his sins and errors of life are the errata and faults escaped in printing, and his repentance is the correction of them. Now, among books, we know some are large volumes, in folio; some little ones, decimosexto; and some are of other sizes, in octavo or quarto. Again, some of these are fairer bound, some in a plainer manner; some are bound in strong vellum or leather and some in thin paper. Some, again, have piety for their subject and treat of godliness; others are profane pamphlets, full of wantonness and folly. But in the last page of every one of them there stands a word which is 'Finis,' implying the end of all."

How suggestive this analogy! Its title-page is a summons to meditation. There are three great days in the life of every man—his birth, his marriage, and his death. The greatest institution in the world is a baby. Mark Twain says: "Why, a baby is just a house and front yard full all by itself! One baby can furnish more business than you and your interior department can attend to. He is enterprising, irrepressible, brimful of lawless activities. Do what you please, you can't make him stay on the reservation. Sufficient unto the day is one baby. Twins amount to a perfect

riot, and there isn't any difference between triplets and an insurrection."

The birth of a baby is a great epoch in any household. It ushers into the world a bundle of possibilities. As the mother sings her lullaby songs, which henceforth nestle and coo in the inner temple of the soul forever, she looks into the eyes of her child and dreams of far-away days and doings when her darling will be a factor in the achievements of the great. He may, like Horatius, be a brave soldier, and with bloody battle-ax hold an invading army at bay; or, like Napoleon, overcome the impossible and say, "It must be done"; or, like Leonidas with his three hundred daring and dauntless heroes, hold some critical point in the world's problems; or, like Washington, become the idol of a nation; or, like Lee, become forever enshrined in the affections of devoted countrymen. He may become a great poet like Shakespeare, whose skillful hand touched every chord of human passion and the music of whose harp echoed from every shore of human life. He may become an able statesman like Bismarck or Gladstone or Jefferson. He may become a great teacher and, like Socrates or Gamaliel or Mark Hopkins, stamp his impress upon the life and character of those who come within range of his personality. He may become a reformer and, like Luther or Wesley, change the whole social and religious life of the world. He may develop into a great preacher and, like Paul or Whitefield or Beecher or Spurgeon or Brooks or Bushnell, give new inspiration to the religious life of a nation. But, on the other hand, he may disappoint every expectation, blight every fond hope, and crush every cherished ideal for his life. Some of the greatest tragedies of life are parental disappointments.

But our analogy presents the groans and the cries as the preface. To the parent at least this is the most memorable period. At first the father finds it difficult to go to sleep for fear that he will not hear the first whimper of the dear little



thing, but later on the poor child must cry itself hoarse to arouse the snoring parent.

Next is the table of contents—childhood. Here we are notified of what is to follow and what we may expect. “The child is father to the man.” It is the period for laying the foundation. How important it is that care be taken in the selection of the material! In concluding that memorable Sermon on the Mount, the Magna Charta of Christianity, the Great Teacher said: “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” It is the arrangement of the program of life. Every life has a mission, and this is the time to plan for worthy execution. Childhood is the outline of life’s picture; by the touches of the subsequent years it is brought to perfection.

Now here are the contents of the Book—the deeds of life. What a variety of books from the standpoint of contents—poetic, historic, philosophic, scientific, devotional! By the volume of our lives we make our contribution to the world. It is said that Lincoln in his youth had access to only four books: the Bible, “Pilgrim’s Progress,” Weems’s “Life of Washington,” and Burns’s poems. Here we have divine truth, devotional reading, biography, and literature. So we are to receive into our lives and transmit to others. Our lives are the avenues of communication, and through character our message is conveyed to the world.

Some one has said that a library is a graveyard where intellects are buried. Let us say rather that a library is a

paradise where the spirits of the great meet and mingle and whisper their messages to all who will listen. It is here we hold fellowship with the great. In history we walk beside the world's mighty actors; in literature we sit at the feet of the thinkers; gazing upon their paintings, we feel the heart throbs of the masters.

This is a practical world, and we make up the volume of life by deeds. This is a practical age, and it demands fruit. It requires service rather than worship, conduct rather than creed, character rather than confession. The Church that emphasizes the mere acknowledgment of a confession or the repetition of a creed or the execution of a ritual, rather than the development of brotherhood and the ministry of helpfulness and service to humanity, should, like Sir John Moore, be "left alone in its glory." And this recalls the beautiful little poem, "The Great Guest Came":

While the cobbler mused there passed his pane  
 A beggar drenched by the driving rain;  
 He called him in from the stormy street,  
 And gave him shoes for his bruised feet.  
 The beggar went; and there came a crone,  
 Her face with wrinkles of sorrow sown;  
 A bundle of fagots bowed her back,  
 And she was spent with the wrench and the rack.  
 He gave her his loaf and steadied her load  
 As she took her way on the weary road.  
 Then to his door came a little child,  
 Lost and afraid in the world so wild—  
 In the big, dark world. Catching it up,  
 He gave it milk in the waiting cup,  
 And led it home to the mother's arms,  
 Out of the reach of the world's alarms.  
 The day went down in the crimson west,  
 And with it the hope of the "Blessed Guest";  
 And Conrad sighed, as the world turned gray:  
 "Why is it, Lord, that your feet delay?  
 Did you forget that this was the day?"  
 Then soft in the distance a voice was heard:

“Lift up your heart, for I’ve kept my word;  
Three times I came to your friendly door,  
Three times my shadow was on your floor.  
I was the beggar with bruised feet;  
I was the woman you gave to eat;  
I was the child on the homeless street.”

Then there are the errata—the sins and imperfections of this book we call life. Many of the pages are marred by these. Sin is either a violation of the law or a lack of conformity to the law. This brings up the division into sins of commission and sins of omission, the former indicating actual transgression; the latter, the neglect of duty. How are these to be remedied? By repentance. Repentance is a godly sorrow for sin and a determination to quit sin. There is a sense in which this correcting process is perpetual. The nearer we get to the light, the more imperfections are revealed in our lives. “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Finally we come to the end of the volume—*finis*. But there is a library beyond. Many years before his death Benjamin Franklin wrote the following epitaph for his own tombstone: “The body of Benjamin Franklin (like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and stripped of its lettering and gilding) lies here, food for worms. Yet the work itself shall not be lost; for it will (as he believed) appear once more in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the Author.”

May the volumes of our lives be so written that they will be worthy of a place in the library of heaven!

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What largely determines our conception of life?
2. How does life appear to the traveler?
3. How does life appear to the business man?
4. How does life appear to the lawyer?

5. How does life appear to the physician?
6. How does life appear to the merchant?
7. How does life appear to the athlete?
8. How does life appear to the soldier?
9. How does life appear to the sailor?
10. How does life appear to the student of literature?
11. Accepting life as a book,
  - (1) What is the title-page?
  - (2) What is the table of contents?
  - (3) What is the errata?
  - (4) What is the end of the volume?

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CHAPTER II.  
THE WRITINGS OF WESLEY.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE WRITINGS OF WESLEY.

IT is difficult to realize that John Wesley ever found time to write anything. His itinerant life, beginning in England, soon extended to Wales, Scotland, Ireland, America, and other places. His ministerial life covered a period of about fifty years. It is estimated that during this time he traveled over a quarter of a million of miles and preached more than forty-two thousand sermons. This gives an average of over two sermons per day for each day in the entire fifty years. That sounds rather fabulous to a man who now finds it difficult to preach two sermons per week.

But Mr. Wesley soon recognized the power of the press as an agency for the dissemination of truth and the elevation of character. Before going to Georgia he issued one sermon and a revised edition of Kempis's "Christian Pattern," and after his return to England he entered upon a course of literary labor of most gigantic proportions.

His resort to the printing press and his entrance upon literary labors grew out of two causes: a desire to counteract the pernicious influence of the unwholesomeness of the literature prevalent at that time and to instruct his own people. He was not an author by choice. That deep spirituality that led him completely to consecrate his energies to evangelism precluded the adoption of literature as a profession. All his writings were subordinate to the one supreme passion of his soul and were made to contribute to the realization of his one all-controlling purpose. Deeply conscious of a divine mission and with an alert mind ever looking for the most effective means, Mr. Wesley could not overlook the press and the printed page. If literature be a mirror reflecting the spirit of the age, there was a crying need

for some one to arise who could turn the thought of the people into purer currents than those to which they were then accustomed. The social degradation, the intellectual anarchy, the moral pollution, and the spiritual apathy of the age had a striking contrast in the benevolent enterprise, the mental vigor, the ethical ideals, and the holy illumination of Wesley and his followers. A study of ecclesiastical history reveals the record of Christianity's loss of original simplicity and power and how it became a vast system of ritualism, under the blighting effect of which public morals and private spiritual life became largely superseded by Church rites. The history of the time between the Restoration and the birth of Methodism is characterized by the most startling evidences of the decay of morals and religion. Watts speaks of the general decay of vital religion in the hearts and lives of men, both Dissenters and Churchmen, and calls upon every one to use all possible efforts for the recovery of dying religion in the world.

Isaac Taylor says: "When Wesley appeared, the Anglican Church was an ecclesiastical system under which the people of England had lapsed into heathenism or a state hardly to be distinguished from it." Even Lecky, after speaking of the low state of morals and religion, says in reference to Methodism: "The creation of a large, powerful, and active sect, extending over both hemispheres, was but one of its consequences. It also exercised a profound and lasting influence upon the spirit of the Established Church, upon the amount and the distribution of the moral forces of the nation, and even upon the course of its political history."

Pope's blighting pantheism and Bolingbroke's bolder infidelity afforded entertainment and amusement for the fashionable. Swift and Stern were leading literary divines, and Fielding and Smollett were regarded as stars in the firmament of fiction. And, strange to say, the literature of the Church was more or less degenerate. It bore the marks



of scholarly attainments, but was without spiritual religion—the inspiring soul of Church literature. Butler seems to form an exception, but his book was for the intellectual giants. It remained for Mr. Wesley to translate the majestic thought of Butler into the dialect of the common people. No man ever lived who placed a greater mass of evangelical literature in the hands of the people. The books he wrote and published were positive and beneficial, calculated to make them wise and useful and good. He wrote for neither fame nor emolument.

Candor compels the admission that Wesley approached literature with less of what is known as the literary spirit than any other man that ever published so many books. Literature to him was not a mere recreation nor yet an end within itself. It was a means to be used for the accomplishment of an end, a weapon to be used in conflict with error, a tool to be used for urgent work. This accounts for the immense and almost incredible output of his pen. Including thirty works prepared in conjunction with his brother Charles, John Wesley's publications number three hundred and seventy-one. The number and the variety of his writings startle us. To enumerate his books would tax the memory of even a bookworm, and a catalogue of their titles would produce a considerable pamphlet. It is marvelous how this evangelist of the gospel of spirituality ever found time to write tracts, grammars, exercises, dictionaries, addresses, apologies, a miscellaneous monthly magazine, works polemical, classical, poetical, scientific, political, and on almost every phase of the life of his day. He was a man not only of uncommon piety, but of extraordinary learning as well. Though a very busy man, he cultivated those literary instincts with which he was so richly endowed. As a result he became familiar not only with the great works of English literature, but with those of the Greek, Latin, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Professor Winchester says:

“Wesley was a scholar of the old school. He could stand Macaulay’s test of a scholar—he could read Greek with his feet on the fender.”

The writings of Wesley may be divided into four classes: personal, polemical, educational, and miscellaneous.

1. *Personal Writings.*—The term “personal” in this connection is used to indicate those writings in the form of special sermons, tracts, and personal appeals. Many of his appeals were addressed to the human conscience and were designed to turn men from sin to righteousness. Wesley antedated the Religious Tract Society by over fifty years. That society was organized in 1799, but as early as 1742 he was engaged in writing, printing, and circulating leaflets and pamphlets containing pungent appeals to various classes: drunkards, swearers, Sabbath breakers, etc.

In 1745, the year of the Stewart Rebellion, he says: “We had within a short time given away some thousands of little tracts among the common people, and it pleased God thereby to provoke others to jealousy, insomuch that the Lord Mayor had ordered a large quantity of papers, dissuading from cursing and swearing, to be printed and distributed among the train bands.” Among the tracts and pamphlets by Wesley were these: “A Word to a Drunkard,” “To a Sabbath Breaker,” “To a Swearer,” “To a Street Walker,” “To a Smuggler,” “To a Condemned Malefactor,” “To a Freeholder,” “Just before an Election,” “A Word to a Protestant,” “Thoughts on the Earthquake at Lisbon.” Many of these were written at spare moments snatched from his strenuous life. Getting thoroughly wet on a journey, he stopped at a halting place to dry his clothes: “I took the opportunity of writing ‘A Word to a Freeholder.’” Upon another occasion he says: “The tide was in. I sat down in a little cottage for three or four hours and translated ‘Aldrich’s Logic.’” These instances show how wisely he redeemed his time and how generously he gave of himself

to enrich every moment for the betterment of the world. His preachers were supplied with these tracts and went forth distributing them like leaves for the healing of a nation.

The following excerpts will serve to illustrate the style of writing displayed in the tracts:

From "A Word to a Sabbath Breaker": "For whose sake does God lay claim to this day—for his sake or thine? Doubtless not for his own. He needed not thee nor any child of man. 'Look unto the heavens and see, and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? If thou art righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he at thy hand?' For thy own sake he calleth thee to serve him. For thy own sake he demands a part of thy time to be restored to him that gave thee all. Acknowledge his love. Learn while thou art on earth to praise the King of heaven. Spend this day as thou hopest to spend that day which never shall have an end."

From "A Word to a Drunkard": "Are you a man? God made you a man, but you make yourself a beast. Wherein does a man differ from a beast? Is it not chiefly in reason and understanding? But you throw away what reason you have. You strip yourself of your understanding. You do all you can to make yourself a mere beast; not a fool, not a madman only, but a swine, a poor filthy swine. Go and wallow with them in the mire! Go, drink on, till thy nakedness be uncovered and shameful spewing be on thy glory! O how honorable is a beast of God's making compared to one who makes himself a beast! But that is not all. You make yourself a devil. You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you and gain others which perhaps were not in you; at least you heighten and increase them. You cause the fire of anger or malice or lust to burn seven times hotter than before. At the same time you grieve the Spirit of God till you drive him quite away from you, and whatever

spark of good remained in your soul you drown and quench at once."

From "A Word to a Swearer": "God seeth thee now; his eyes are upon thee; he observes all thy thoughts; he compasseth thy path; he counteth all thy steps; he is acquainted with all thy ways; by him thy actions are weighed; nor is there a word in thy tongue but he knoweth it altogether."

From "A Word to a Condemned Malefactor": "What a condition you are in! The sentence is passed; you are condemned to die, and this sentence is to be executed shortly. You have no way to escape. These fetters, these walls, these gates and bars, these keepers cut off all hope; therefore die you must. But must you die like a beast without thinking what it is to die? You need not; you will not; you will think a little first; you will consider: 'What is death?' It is leaving this world, these houses, lands, and all things under the sun, leaving all these things, never to return; your place will know you no more. It is leaving these pleasures, for there is no eating, drinking, gaming, no merriment in the grave. It is leaving your acquaintances, companions, friends, your father, mother, wife, children. You cannot stay with them, neither can they go with you; you must part, perhaps forever. It is leaving a part of yourself, leaving this body which has accompanied you so long. Your soul must now drop its old companion to rot and molder in the dust. It must enter upon a new unbodied state. It must stand naked before God."

These selections are amply sufficient to give us an insight into the style of Mr. Wesley as displayed in this department of his writings. It is very evident that he was no hunter after pretty phrases or high-sounding sentences. On the contrary, his literary ideal seems to have consisted of plain words, short sentences, and clear thinking. In 1788 he writes: "I dare no more write in a fine style than wear a fine coat. A man with one foot in the grave must waste no time

on ornament. But were it otherwise, had I time to spare, I should still write just as I do. I should purposely decline what many admire—a highly ornamented style. I cannot admire French oratory; I despise it from my heart.”

Some one may say that this is the feeling of an old man, but it seems ever to have been his ideal, for as early as 1764 he had written: “As for me, I never think of my style at all, but just set down my words that come first. Only when I transcribe anything for the press, then I think it my duty to see that every phrase be clear, pure, and proper. Conciseness (which is now, as it were, natural to me) brings *quantum sufficit* of strength. If, after all, I observe any stiff expression, I throw it out, neck and shoulders. Clearness, in particular, is necessary for you and me, because we are to instruct people of the lowest understanding.”

In his criticism of Wesley’s writings Leslie Stephen says: “He shows remarkable literary power. His writings are means to a direct, practical end. It would be difficult to find any letters more direct, forcible, and pithy in expression. He goes straight to the mark without one superfluous flourish. He writes as a man confined within the narrowest limits of time and space, whose thoughts are so well in hand that he can say everything needful in those limits. The compression gives emphasis and never causes confusion.”

2. *Polemical Writings.*—Mr. Wesley was not by nature a controversialist, for he was one of the most patient, tolerant, and forgiving men that ever lived. He was patient with men’s faults, tolerant of their individual opinions, and forgiving in reference to personal attacks. He was not likely to engage in needless controversy or to embroil himself in unnecessary disputes. While about his personality and work there ever was a storm of controversy, it was not of his choosing, and he only entered the field of polemics with an all-consuming desire to defend the truth and extend the kingdom of righteousness.

His first controversy was with the Moravians, his former friends. It grew out of his conviction that he discovered among them dangerous tendencies to mysticism in belief and unsafe license in practice. Taking his controversial writings as a whole, we find that three great subjects engaged his attention.

(1) The slanders about himself and the misrepresentations in regard to his work. After the appearance of Bishop Lavington's libelous book on Methodism, many volumes of similar character appeared. The most prominent of these were: Nott's "Bampton Lectures," Nightingale's "Portraiture of Methodism," Dr. Bennett's "History of the Dissenters," Philip's "Life of Whitefield," and Conder's "Analytical View of All Religions." Among Mr. Wesley's personal defenses may be mentioned his "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion." These are of such an earnest and dignified character that they deserve to have a place by the side of the "Apologies" of the early Church. In the first appeal, after skillfully handling the objections, he makes a manly appeal to men who pride themselves on their reason as to the unreasonableness of an ungodly life, thus wounding them with arrows taken from their own quiver. In the second appeal there are three parts, the first of which is almost wholly defensive, while the second is a fearless exposure of commonly practiced sins, and the third restates the defense and accentuates the rebuke. The first appeal was written in 1744. Here is a specimen: "Behold, the day of the Lord is come! He is again visiting and redeeming his people. Having eyes, see ye not? Having ears, do ye not hear, neither understand with your hearts? At this hour the Lord is rolling away our reproach. Already his standard is set up. His Spirit is poured forth on the outcasts of men and his love shed abroad in their hearts. Love of all mankind, meekness, gentleness, humbleness of mind, holy and heavenly affections do take the place of hate, anger,

pride, and revenge and vile or vain affections. Hence wherever the power of the Lord spreads springs outward religion in all its forms. The houses of God are filled; the table of the Lord is thronged on every side. And those who thus show their love of God show they love their neighbor also by being careful to maintain good works also, by doing all manner of good, as they have time, to all men. They are careful likewise to abstain from all evil. Cursing, Sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, with all other (however fashionable) works of the devil, are not once named among them. All this is plain, demonstrable fact. For this also is not done in a corner. Now, do ye acknowledge the day of your visitation? Do you bless God and rejoice therein?"

(2) Theological controversies. In this field we find Wesley's largest and ablest contribution to polemical literature—his work on "Original Sin." It was written in reply to Dr. John Taylor, himself an able Unitarian minister. While Mr. Wesley treats his antagonist with courtesy, he at the same time strives with great zeal to demolish the objectionable system of theology. The author first considers the subject in relation to the state of mankind, past and present. Following this historical review, the Scriptural proof and definition of the doctrine are given, and then an exposition of the opponent's method of dealing with Scripture. Dr. Taylor had given answers to other writers on the subject; so Mr. Wesley examines these answers. Though the learned Doctor had replied to others, he never attempted an answer to Wesley. The treatise on "Original Sin" was written in 1756, and the following excerpt from the "Preface" will indicate the spirit and style of the discussion: "I am sensible in speaking on so tender a point as this must needs be to those who believe the Christian system there is danger of a warmth that does no honor to our cause, nor is it at all countenanced by the revelation which we defend. I desire neither to show nor to feel this, but 'to speak the truth

in love' (the only warmth which the gospel allows) and to write with calmness, though not with indifference. There is likewise a danger of despising our opponents and of speaking with an air of contempt or disdain. I would gladly keep clear of this also, well knowing that a diffidence of ourselves is far from being a diffidence of our cause; I distrust myself, not my argument. O that the God of the Christians might be with me, that his Spirit might give me understanding and enable me to think and 'speak as the oracles of God' without going from them to the right or the left!"

(3) The Calvinistic controversy. This was Mr. Wesley's most voluminous controversy. On the one side were he and Fletcher; on the other the Hills and Toplady. These good men tilted each other's doctrinal shields in all earnestness, if at times with rather rude assaults; but they have long since met in holy fellowship in the land where no controversies arise and no polemics are needed. They have long ago found out wherein each was in error and have stood face to face with the truth in the undimmed light of eternal day. Wesley never wrangled about trifles. He earnestly set forth his convictions on religious liberty, human depravity, justification by faith, sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and universal redemption. Among the works of Mr. Wesley written during this controversy may be mentioned "Predestination Calmly Considered," "A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and His Friend," "Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ," "What Is an Arminian?" and "Mr. Hill's Review," etc. The following is selected from "Predestination Calmly Considered": "Now, then, without any extenuation on the one hand or exaggeration on the other, let us look upon this doctrine, call it what you please, naked and in its native color. Before the foundations of the world were laid, God of his own will and pleasure fixed a decree concerning all the children of men who should



be born to the end of the world. This degree was unchangeable with regard to God and irresistible with regard to man. And herein it was ordained, that one part of mankind should be saved from sin and hell, and all the rest left to perish forever and ever without help, without hope. That none of these should have that grace which alone could prevent their dwelling in everlasting burnings God decreed for this cause alone, 'because it was his good pleasure,' and for this end 'to show forth his power and his sovereignty over all the earth.' "

## QUESTIONS.

1. What evidence have we of John Wesley's energy and industry?
2. What did Mr. Wesley realize early in his ministry?
3. What causes led to Mr. Wesley's use of the press?
4. How does literature mirror an age?
5. Judging from literature, what of the moral condition of the age when Methodism was born?
6. Did Mr. Wesley approach literature in the usual "literary spirit"?
7. What evidence have we that Wesley was a prolific writer?
8. What are the four divisions into which Mr. Wesley's writings may be classified?
9. What of Wesley's style as a writer?
10. What is his great literary production?

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CHAPTER III.

THE WRITINGS OF WESLEY (CONTINUED).



### CHAPTER III.

#### THE WRITINGS OF WESLEY (CONTINUED).

WESLEY was not only a zealous evangelist proclaiming the gospel of spirituality, but he was a successful educator as well. No man ever had more thorough intellectual equipment. His education began at the knee of Susanna Wesley, the model mother, and from childhood to the age of twenty-three he was under tutors and governors, passing through all grades of scholarship, from the primary school to a college fellowship, culminating practically in the headship of the colleges in the most famous university in the world. Taught in infancy to reduce his life to systematic industry, he applied himself with rare diligence, and lost as little time, perhaps, as any man in history. At the early age of ten he was placed in the Charterhouse School, London; at seventeen he entered Christ Church College, Oxford; received his A.M. degree at twenty-four; and for a period of nine years he was fellow in Lincoln College, where he became vice rector by the choice of the professors. This is sufficient to indicate his proficiency in the university studies in vogue at that time—Greek and Latin languages and literature, the dialectics of Aristotle, history and philosophy. Even after his election to the fellowship he pursued his studies with systematic regularity for several years and added to previous acquirements a thorough knowledge of German, French, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew, and Arabic; also higher mathematics, including Euclid and the writings of Sir Isaac Newton. He could readily converse in Latin and German and could conduct the services of the Church in French and Italian.

Dr. W. H. Fitchett in his "Wesley and His Century" says: "Himself a scholar, nurtured from his very childhood

in an intellectual atmosphere, the fellow of a historic university, hate of ignorance was to him an instinct and a passion. Knowledge and faith, he held, had the closest kinship. No member of his societies must remain untaught. And Wesley deliberately set himself to bring within the reach of his people the best literature the world at that day possessed. He anticipated by more than a century the age of cheap books and popular literature."

3. *Wesley's Educational Writings*.—A movement that was born in a university would naturally be expected to advocate the education of the people, and the history of Methodism has not been disappointing in this respect. The creed of Methodism has ever taught the dignity and worth of our nature. Catching a true vision of both God and man as illustrated in Christ, it realized the kinship of the two natures and the possibility of the restoration of the latter to the image of the former. So the work of the Church is not only evangelistic but educational. It must not only call men to repentance, by which they realize their kinship to the divine, but it must by educational processes and means develop the divine in every man. This was the starting point, and the world owes to Mr. Wesley the idea of popular education.

As early as 1740 Mr. Wesley took charge of the famous school at Kingswood, started by Mr. Whitefield, which was a leader in the education of the masses. The school was enlarged in 1748, and then Mr. Wesley entered upon his educational authorship. To provide for the needs of this school, and others as well, he prepared several textbooks, among which were "A Short English Grammar" and "A Short Latin Grammar." The latter marked an epoch in educational work and progress. It was the first Latin grammar in English, all hitherto being in Latin and useless without a living teacher, and making the study even then very difficult. But this example of Wesley is now universally fol-

lowed. He wrote "Histories" of Rome and of England, "Grammars" of the Latin, French, Greek, and Hebrew languages. Two years before Dr. Johnson published his "English Dictionary" Wesley issued his "The Complete English Dictionary," which reached a second edition in a few years. He prepared "Selections" from various authors for school use, a plan which has become so universal and popular. He also wrote an original work on elocution, the oldest in the English language, which, though condensed, contained all the fundamental principles of public speaking. He wrote a "Compendium of Logic," which was also a pioneer in the English language. He wrote a concise book on "Electricity"; and while the world was still laughing at Franklin's claims of discovery, Wesley was introducing electricity into hospital work. Truly does Bishop Haven say: "For fertility of invention and commanding influence on succeeding generations Wesley deserves to rank among educators with Milton and Locke and Pestalozzi and Froebel."

Following his work on electricity came one that must have taken much labor and time to produce—the one entitled "A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation; or, A Compendium of Natural Philosophy." Not least among his educational works was an "Extract of Milton's Paradise Lost, with Notes."

Mr. Wesley's work on elocution, though concise, is a most admirable treatise, and should be read by every one desiring to understand the art of public speaking. It consists of four sections—namely: First, how we may speak so as to be heard without difficulty and with pleasure; secondly, general rules for the variation of the voice; thirdly, particulars for varying the voice; fourthly, of gesture. Following is the first paragraph: "Before we enter upon particular rules, I would advise all who can (1) to study the art of speaking betimes and to practice it as often as possible before they have contracted any of the imperfections or vices

of speaking, for these may be easily avoided at first; but when they are once learned it is extremely difficult to unlearn them. I advise all young persons (2) to be governed in speaking, as in all things, by reason rather than example, and therefore to have a special care whom they imitate therein, and to imitate only what is right in their speaking, not their blemishes and imperfections."

The author mentions the following as the chief faults of speaking: (1) The speaking too loud. (2) The speaking too low. (3) The speaking in a thick, cluttering manner. (4) The speaking too fast. (5) The speaking too slow. (6) The speaking with an irregular, desultory, and uneven voice, raised or depressed unnaturally and unseasonably. (7) But the greatest and most common fault of all is the speaking with a tone. Some have a womanish, squeaking tone; some a singing or canting one; some a high, swelling, theatrical tone, laying too much emphasis on every sentence; some have an awful, solemn tone; others an odd, whimsical, whining tone, not to be expressed in words.

A very large part of Mr. Wesley's contribution to the literature of his day consisted of abridgments of the works of other writers and their adaptation to the needs of the times and circumstances. His most prodigious achievement along this line of activity was the "Christian Library," consisting of fifty volumes. This library is a monument to his energy, ability, and benevolence. It was a large storehouse of intellectual and spiritual wealth placed within the easy reach of the masses. He seems never to have stopped to count the cost either in the expenditure of money or personal energy. His only purpose was to bring the best products of the best minds within the reach of the needy; so in the "Christian Library" the finest productions of the Christian minds of the generations are brought together. Here we find the works of such master minds as Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp; St. Ambrose, Arndt, and John Fox; Hall,



Leighton, and Tillotson. Here the readers found fellowship with South, Cave, Manton, Cudworth, and Jeremy Taylor, as well as Baxter, Howe, Flaval, and Owen; likewise Brainerd, Janeway, and Young. He did not confine himself to native books, but brought in such foreign treasures as Pascal, De Renty, and Bengel. Such a task had never been attempted before and has not been surpassed since. Besides this famous library, there were sixty-seven other abridgments and translations, making in all one hundred and seventeen volumes.

This gigantic enterprise was achieved at a financial loss to Mr. Wesley. His loss, however, was made up by the income from other sources, so that he was not hampered in his noble work.

After a few years this valuable compilation was followed by a monthly magazine containing articles partly original and partly selected, and containing at once "milk" for the intellectual and spiritual babes and "meat" for those of riper age and powers. On the title-page of Mr. Wesley's dictionary is an "N. B." that runs thus, "The author assures you he thinks this the best English dictionary in the world," and the following paragraph from the "Preface" will show that the sedate and scholarly author was not entirely devoid of humor: "I should add no more, but I have so often observed that the only way, according to the modern taste, for any author to procure commendation to his book is vehemently to commend it himself. For the want of this deference to the public several excellent tracts lately printed, but left to commend themselves by their intrinsic worth, are utterly unknown or forgotten; whereas if a writer of tolerable sense will but bestow a few violent encomiums on his own work, especially if they are skillfully arranged in the title-page, it will pass through six editions in a trice, the world being too complaisant to give a gentleman the lie and taking it for granted he understands his own performance

best. In compliance, therefore, with the taste of the age, I add that this little dictionary is not only the shortest and cheapest but likewise by many degrees the most correct which is extant at this day. Many are the mistakes in all the other English dictionaries which I have seen; whereas I can truly say I know of none in this. And I can conceive the reader will believe me; for if I had, I should not have left it there. Use, then, this help till you find a better."

As to his purpose in writing this book he says: "As incredible as it may appear, I must allow that this dictionary is not published to get money, but to assist persons of common sense and no learning to understand the best English authors, and that with as little expense of either time or money as the nature of the thing will allow. To this end it contains not a heap of Greek and Latin words just tagged with English terminations (for no good English writer, none but vain and senseless pedants, give these any place in their writings); not a scroll of barbarous law expressions, which are neither Greek, Latin, nor good English; not a crowd of technical terms, the meaning whereof is to be sought in books expressly written on the subjects to which they belong."

4. *Wesley's Miscellaneous Writings*.—Under this section may be found works that might have easily been placed under preceding classifications, but for sufficient reasons the present arrangement is selected. His miscellaneous works were so numerous and various that they defy classification. He stood ready to offer the people assistance on any topic upon which they needed help or guidance. He provided instruction and counsel on the grave problems of life and character and did not forget to provide lighter reading for their leisure hours, as some of his poetical productions and "Henry, Earl of Moreland," will show.

Mr. Wesley's printed sermons were the result of the ever-present desire to furnish the people with adequate and

wholesome literature. At an early stage of his work it became apparent to him that some plain, simple, and definite statement of the theology of the great revival must be produced as an explanation and a perpetuating influence. Hence we have his first series of sermons, consisting of fifty-three discourses, which still form the Doctrinal Standards of Methodism. He says that his purpose in writing these sermons was to furnish plain truth for plain people. His aim was to state the great doctrines of Christianity in fresh, direct, and untechnical language. The only books at his side while he wrote these sermons were the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament. In the preface to the printed sermons he says: "The following sermons contain the substance of what I have been preaching for between eight and nine years last past. During that time I have frequently spoken in public on every subject in the ensuing collection, and I am not conscious that there is any point of doctrine on which I am accustomed to speak in public which is not here, incidentally, if not professedly, laid before every Christian reader. Every serious man who peruses them will therefore see in the clearest manner what these doctrines are which I embrace and teach as essentials of true religion." (Written in 1747.)

Rev. M. Lelièvre, a distinguished French Methodist, says: "Wesley as an organizer has usurped public attention to such an extent as to quite obscure his character as a preacher. And yet in his power and success as a preacher was laid the foundation of all his power and success as an organizer. He was, in simple truth, the most awakening and spiritually penetrating and powerful preacher of his age. Whitefield was more dramatic but less intense; more pictorial but less close and forcible, less incisive and conclusive. In Wesley's calmer discourses lucid and engaging exposition laid the basis for close and searching application. In his more intense utterances logic and passion were fused

into a white heat of mingled argument, denunciation, and appeal, often of a most personal searchingness, often overwhelming in vehement home thrusts."

Wesley's calmer method and power of reasoning are illustrated in his "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion," reference to which has already been made in these studies and a specimen of which has been given. The fervor of his preaching reaches high-water mark in his famous sermon on "Free Grace." Here is a specimen: "The grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is free in all and free for all. First, it is free in all to whom it is given. It does not depend upon any power or merit in man; no, not in any degree, neither in whole nor in part. It does not in any wise depend either on the good works or righteousness of the receiver; not on anything he has done or anything he is. It does not depend on his endeavors. It does not depend on his good tempers or good desires or good purposes and intentions, for all of these flow from the free grace of God; they are streams only, not the fountain. They are the fruits of free grace and not the root. They are not the cause but the effects of it. Whatsoever is good in man or is done by man, God is the author and doer of it. Thus is his grace free in all—that is, no way depending on any power or merit in man, but on God alone, who freely gave us his own Son and 'with him freely giveth all things.' But is it free for all as well as in all? To this some have answered, 'No.' It is free only for those whom God hath ordained to life, and they are but a little flock."

With fervid eloquence the preacher then proceeds to handle the subject of predestination with the enthusiasm of an ardent Arminian. But the reader who turns to these printed sermons to find the secret of Wesley's power in the pulpit or any echoes of thrilling delivery by which, day after day, he held vast throngs in almost breathless attention is doomed to disappointment. They resemble the original

deliverance about as fossils resemble their originals. But though the living fervor of the magnetic speaker could not be transferred to the printed page and preserved for future generations, nevertheless these discourses are classics of pure, pointed, and plain production. Like his sermons, Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament" were meant to be a manual of theology for his people. His knowledge of the Scriptures was characterized by minuteness and accuracy. In his "Revised New Testament," which he made as a basis for the "Notes," he anticipated every important change made by the translators in the Revised Version of the present day. Besides the "Notes on the New Testament," he prepared a similar, though less original, work on the Old Testament in three quarto volumes.

Mr. Wesley was a constant writer of letters—"wrote more letters than Horace Walpole." In these he sometimes discusses in a friendly way the fundamentals of his creed; again he writes of personal matters; still again he gives wise counsel and direction; or finally we may find vindication of the course pursued in certain circumstances. A whole volume could be given to the study of these letters, but the scope of these studies forbids further mention here.

And now let us turn to the masterpiece of his miscellaneous writings—his Journal. Here we see the man as he really was, not as he was represented by either friend or foe. Here we have the man's unconscious autobiography. Here the inner secrets of the man are laid bare. Perusing its pages we see how versatile, how industrious, how benevolent, how patient under insult, how deeply concerned about the Divine honor and how indifferent to the honors men might confer upon him, his complete consecration to a great ideal, his culture, his courtesy, his combination of high and holy instinct—in fact, all that entered into one of the most marvelous characters that ever lived among men. Only portions of the Journal have been published, but the com-

plete manuscript still exists, in twenty-six bound volumes, and it is sincerely hoped that some day it will be printed in full, for no doubt the unpublished portions contain much information in regard to the inner life and experiences of the author as well as to people. In speaking of Mr. Wesley, Professor Winchester says: "It were idle to ask whether he were the greatest man of his century. That century was rich in names the world calls great—great generals like Marlborough, great monarchs like Frederick, great statesmen like Chatham and Burke, poets and critics like Pope and Johnson and Lessing, writers who helped revolutionize society like Voltaire and Rousseau; but run over the whole brilliant list, and where among them all is the man whose motives were so pure, whose life was so unselfish, whose character was so spotless? And where among them all is the man whose influence—social, moral, religious—was productive of such vast good and of so little evil as that exerted by this plain man who himself exemplified and taught thousands of his followers to know what the religion of Jesus Christ really means?"

The first paragraph of the *Journal* reads as follows: "It was in pursuance of an advice given by Bishop Taylor in his 'Rules of Holy Living and Dying' that about fifteen years ago I began to take a more exact account than I had done before of the manner wherein I spent my time, writing down how I had employed every hour. This I continued to do wherever I was till the time of my leaving England. The variety of scenes which I then passed through induced me to transcribe from time to time the more material parts of my diary, adding here and there such little reflections as occurred to my mind."

And now only a glimpse or two into this famous *Journal*:

At four in the morning we took boat, and in half an hour landed at Deal, it being Wednesday, February 1, the anniversary festival in Georgia for Mr. Oglethorpe's landing there. It is now two years

and almost four months since I left my native country in order to teach the Georgia Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I least of all suspected), that I, who had come to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God.

*Wednesday, February 1, 1738.*—Many reasons have I to bless God, though the design I went upon did not take effect for my having been carried into a strange land contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby I trust that he has in some measure humbled me and proved me and shown me what was in my heart.

*14th.*—In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's "Preface to the Epistle to the Romans." About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

*July 16.*—In the morning, being by myself, I found the work of the Spirit was very powerful upon me (although, you know, God does not deal with every soul in the same way). As my mother bore me with great pain, so did I feel great pain in my soul in being born of God. Indeed, I thought the pains of death were upon me, that my soul was then taking leave of the body. In this violent agony I continued about four hours, and then I began to feel the Spirit of God bearing witness with my spirit that I was born of God.

*Monday, June 11, 1739* (writing to friends in London).—Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far, I mean, that in whatever part of it I am I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all who are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation.

Thus we have the epochs of his spiritual development—conversion, witness of the Spirit, and consecration to a world mission.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What of Wesley as an educator?
2. What are some of Wesley's educational writings?
3. What of Mr. Wesley's scholarship?
4. What particular elements in Wesley's sermons render them a permanent contribution to theological literature?

5. In what fields of literary effort was Wesley a leader?
6. According to Mr. Wesley, what are the chief faults of public speaking?
7. What constituted a large part of Wesley's contribution to the literature of his day?
8. What of Wesley as a letter writer?
9. How does Wesley fare when compared with the great men of his time?
10. What led Wesley to keep a journal?

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CHAPTER IV.  
THE LYRICS OF METHODISM.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE LYRICS OF METHODISM.

NOT the least product of the Wesleyan revival was the world's best and most inspiring lyric poetry. There was urgent need for improvement in the extant psalmody. The productions of Sternhold and Hopkins, as well as those of Tate and Brady, were so deficient as to be wholly unsuited for devotional and inspirational purposes. So inferior were the works of Sternhold and Hopkins that Wesley characterized them as "miserable, scandalous doggerel."

The fervent experiences, the great and fundamental doctrines, the conscious realization of the presence of the divine always and everywhere were all calculated to inspire to the sublimest song.

The first Methodist hymn book was issued while the Wesleys were in America and was published in Charleston, S. C., in 1737. The next year they issued one in England; while in the year 1739, which was the epochal one of Methodism, their "Hymns and Sacred Poems" appeared and reached the second edition before the end of the year. Then followed in rapid succession every year and sometimes twice during the year new editions of these as well as new poetic works which were scattered throughout England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and America. This continued until there were forty-nine poetical publications to be numbered among their literary achievements. It has been well said that the achievement of Methodism in this respect alone is one of the most extraordinary historical facts of the last century. We can readily perceive that its influence on the popular taste, intellectual as well as moral, was incalculably great and important. So revolutionary was its effect that the psalmody prevalent in the Church at the advent of this new movement was soon discarded and could not now be tol-

erated. The Wesleys soon towered far above all their predecessors in this department of literature, and no student of lyric poetry would now dare dispute their superiority. Their worthy example, as well as the religious needs of the day, elicited emulation; so appeared the hymns of Toplady, Newton, Doddridge, and others.

*The Poetry of John Wesley.*

While the great work of John Wesley lay in other fields, he was endowed with considerable poetic genius, and his work in this department stands the test of rigid criticism. He had the poetic gift, and, so far as other pressing duties permitted, he used it for the glory of God and the benefit of humanity. At an early period he began to write and publish sacred poetry and kept it up for nearly fifty years. Among his poetical publications may be mentioned "Moral and Sacred Poems," "Hymns for Children," "Hymns for the Use of Families," "Epistles," "Elegies," "Funeral Hymns," "Extracts" from Herbert and Milton and Young, "Hymns with Tunes Attached," and "Doctrinal Controversies Versified." In his "Cry of the Reprobate" there is deepest pathos, while the "Hymns of God's Everlasting Love" contain biting sarcasm couched in rhythmic language. His intense patriotism finds expression in "Song on the Occurrence of a Threatened Invasion."

What hymn breathes a deeper spirit of devotion than the one beginning

We lift our hearts to thee,  
O Day-Star from on high!

which is entitled "A Morning Hymn" and is found in a collection published by Wesley in 1741? It is thought that the famous saying of Plato, "*Lumen est umbra Dei*," suggested to Mr. Wesley the third line of the first stanza, which reads:

The sun itself is but thy shade.

And in the fifth stanza we have a most appropriate prayer for the opening day :

May we this life improve,  
 To mourn for errors past ;  
 And live this short, revolving day  
 As if it were our last.

No doubt the following grew out of the ripening experience of the consecrated pilgrim as he journeyed toward the celestial city :

How happy is the pilgrim's lot,  
 How free from every anxious thought,  
 From worldly hope and fear !  
 Confined to neither court nor cell,  
 His soul disdains on earth to dwell,  
 He only sojourns here.

This happiness in part is mine,  
 Already saved from low design,  
 From every creature-love ;  
 Blest with the scorn of finite good,  
 My soul is lightened of its load,  
 And seeks the things above.

The things eternal I pursue ;  
 A happiness beyond the view  
 Of those that basely pant  
 For things by nature felt and seen ;  
 Their honors, wealth, and pleasures mean,  
 I neither have nor want.

No foot of land do I possess,  
 No cottage in the wilderness.  
 A poor wayfaring man,  
 I lodge awhile in tents below,  
 Or gladly wander to and fro  
 Till I my Canaan gain.

Nothing on earth I call my own ;  
 A stranger, to the world unknown,  
 I all their goods despise :

I trample on their whole delight,  
 And seek a city out of sight,  
 A city in the skies.

There is my house and portion fair;  
 My treasure and my heart are there,  
 And my abiding home;  
 For me my elder brethren stay,  
 And angels beckon me away,  
 And Jesus bids me come.

I come, thy servant, Lord, replies,  
 I come to meet thee in the skies,  
 And claim my heavenly rest!  
 Now let the pilgrim's journey end;  
 Now, O my Saviour, Brother, Friend,  
 Receive me to thy breast!

This beautiful lyric has elicited unstinted praise from its first appearance till the present. It was written in 1746 and was published the next year in "Hymns for Those That Seek and Those That Have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ." The saintly and sainted Mrs. Fletcher is said to have quoted on her deathbed the last six lines of it with telling effect.

His Doxology,

To God the Father, Son,  
 And Spirit, One in Three,  
 Be glory, as it was, is now,  
 And shall forever be,

is eminently worthy of a place by the side of those by Thomas Ken, Isaac Watts, and others.

*The Lyric Poetry of Charles Wesley.*

Rev. Charles Wesley was a man of scholarly instincts and attainments and was a preacher of great force and impressiveness, but it is as a writer of devotional poetry that he is to be permanently remembered. As a composer of

beautiful hymns suitable to Christian worship he has no peer in the English language and perhaps stands alone in the realm of the uninspired. No other person has ever written so many hymns of surpassing beauty and excellence. It is estimated that his published hymns would make about ten duodecimo volumes, while those left in manuscript and evidently designed for publication would constitute at least ten more volumes. But the eminence of his productions is due not to their number but their excellence. Isaac Watts, who was Charles Wesley's only rival in this realm, freely and fully acknowledged the superior character of the work of Methodism's lyric poet. He said upon one occasion that he would give all he had ever written for the honor of being the author of Charles Wesley's unrivaled hymn entitled "Wrestling Jacob," the first stanza of which reads:

Come, O thou Traveler unknown,  
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;  
My company before is gone,  
And I am left alone with thee:  
With thee all night I mean to stay,  
And wrestle till the break of day.

The original poem consisted of fourteen stanzas and is based upon Genesis xxxii. 24-26. James Montgomery, himself a lyric poet of no mean ability, in his "Christian Psalmist" says: "Among Charles Wesley's highest achievements may be recorded, 'Come, O thou Traveler unknown,' in which with consummate art he carries on the action of a lyrical drama, every turn in the conflict with the mysterious Being against whom he wrestles all night being marked with precision by the varying language of the speaker, accompanied by intense, increasing interest till the rapturous moment of the discovery, when he prevails and exclaims: 'I know thee, Saviour, who thou art!'"

In the poetical productions of Charles Wesley we have not only volume but variety. He presents every important

doctrine of the Bible, every degree and phase of religious experience, almost every shade of spiritual thought and feeling, and very nearly all the relations of human life. In this respect no poet has ever surpassed him. So great is the range covered in his writings that, in whatever condition in life we may find ourselves, we may turn to his works and find suitable material. His whole soul seemed to be under the sway of poetic genius, and his thoughts seemed to be ever at home in melody and rhythm. Rev. Dr. Abel Stevens says: "The variety of his meters (said to be unequalled by any English writer whatever) shows how impulsive were his poetic emotions and how wonderful his facility in their spontaneous and varied utterance. In the Wesleyan Hymn Book alone they amount to at least twenty-six, and others are found in his other productions. They march at times like lengthened processions with solemn grandeur; they sweep at other times like chariots of fire through the heavens; they are broken like sobs of grief at the graveside, play the joyful affections of childhood at the hearth, or shout like victors in the fray of the battle field. No man ever surpassed Charles Wesley in the harmonies of language. To him language was a diapason."

There is an ease about his compositions that is really charming, and the reader ever feels that he is perusing the spontaneous expressions of a warm heart pulsating with emotion and music. He was a classic scholar, but it is doubtful if any man ever wrote in purer or stronger English. Words of Greek, Latin, and French origin were rarely used, and then only for the sake of meter. But it was greatly to his advantage that he was familiar with the eminent poets of antiquity, for thus he became thoroughly conversant with the laws of versification. Most exquisitely did he blend scholarship and simplicity; so while his sentiments and language are admired by the most competent critics, his hymns are perfectly intelligible to the common



people. His cadences never pall on the ear or weary the attention. Like landscape scenery or masterly musical compositions, they perpetually charm by variety and novelty. Having in his own personal experiences passed through almost every struggle and victory characterizing the soul in its progress toward the divine, extending from the depths of penitence to the summits of love, he could easily describe the way to others. In his own experience came the vision of his mission. Having a vision, his task was no mere drudgery; having a task, his vision was not an idle dream. His fame, therefore, rests not only upon quantity but upon quality as well.

It has been said in a previous paragraph that Mr. Wesley's only rival in the field under discussion is Isaac Watts, but the general opinion of competent critics is that the bard of Methodism is entitled to the place of honor. The Rev. B. F. Tefft, D.D., LL.D., whilom President of Genesee College and author of "Hungary and Kossuth," "Webster and His Masterpieces," etc., is entitled to consideration as a critic when it comes to questions of gradation in authorship. The following is a condensation of his study of the comparative merits of Watts and Wesley:

Let any competent critic look through the whole range of English lyric poetry, from the rugged attempts of Sternhold to the sentimental hymns and psalms of Dr. Watts, and, unless prejudiced by ecclesiastical connections, the balance of lyric genius will be bound to fall in favor of the Wesleyan bard. Dr. Watts is Mr. Charles Wesley's superior in the general structure of his sentences as well as in the flow and softness of his verse. His figures, however, are drawn too much from nature, and yet too little from that part of nature which has been rendered sacred and familiar by the penmen of Holy Writ. There is a conceit, a pettiness in the style of Dr. Watts which we expect to find in the smaller poets of the sentimental class, but which mar the simple grandeur of devotional compositions. When a man lifts up his voice in the praises of Almighty God, he does not wish to trifle with such delicacies as rainbows and roses, but to utter the deep emotions of a broken or confiding heart. Dr. Watts, however,

is almost always liable to introduce the images of a superficial imagination into the sublimest productions of his genius. Charles Wesley, though keenly alive to everything beautiful in the material universe, rose so high in his lyrics as to lose sight of terrestrial objects or touched upon them only for a moment to take his flight to more glorious themes. Wesley is never sentimental; he never adorns his poems with the fancies and bagatelles of the poetic art; he never fetters the soaring spirit by a burden, however gay and sweet, of empyrean stars and the flowers of earth. Watts often begins his hymns where the lark closes his morning song—"at heaven's gate"—and he then as frequently descends upon some pretty bush or alights upon some green and flowery bank to conclude an anthem in the audience of the beasts and birds which should have closed at the very throne of God. Wesley, on the other hand, begins where Watts terminates his songs, and then rises at once on the pinions of a lofty and victorious faith till, like the rapt apostle on the isle of the apocalypse, he falls prostrate amidst heavenly splendors too refulgent for mortal sight. Watts and his school of poets are warmly sensuous, praising in reality the works and workmanship of God in the name of glorifying God himself. When looking at the life of faith on earth, the soft and smooth-flowing Watts would set the soul to singing:

"There is a land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign;  
Eternal day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers;  
Death, like a narrow sea, divides  
This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood  
Stand dressed in living green;  
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,  
While Jordan rolled between."

That is all like Watts and the poets of his school, such as Stennet, Steele, Addison, and Opie.

As a lyric poet Charles Wesley occupies a much more eminent position than Dr. Watts. His hymns are not descriptive poems; nor are they weakened by material imagery; nor do they seem to have been written simply to be read. They are songs; they are deeply

religious songs; they are personal songs; they are the words employed by the individual worshiper. They are the words of the soul—not when touched by the beautiful forms of nature, but when roused by that “beatific vision” spoken of by Milton or lost in the blaze of that “realizing light” of faith which the worshiper feels to be the substance of his own experience, an emanation from himself. In the very first verse of the first hymn in the Methodist collection Charles Wesley, personating every true worshiper, gives the keynote to Wesleyan hymnology when he exclaims:

“O for a thousand tongues to sing  
 My great Redeemer’s praise,  
 The glories of my God and King,  
 The triumphs of his grace!”

The distinguishing characteristic of Wesley as a lyric poet is the same as that of Shakespeare among the dramatic poets. He does not describe a character or a passion but enacts it. He throws himself into the attitude of the character he wishes to represent, feels all that such a character could feel, and then utters the sentiments and experiences in the most fitting language. In keeping with this mode of composition, he is successively a lost and wretched sinner, writhing and quaking under the anguish he carries within; then an awakened penitent, beating his breast like the praying publican; then a newborn believer, trusting to the glimmering light that has dawned within him, but trembling lest the light go out and he return to the land of darkness; then a confirmed and grown-up Christian, strong in the faith once delivered to the saints and working his way to yet loftier attainments; then a miserable backslider, a repenting and returning prodigal, a vigorous coworker with God in the vast enterprise of saving the world, etc.

No words or sentiments could be more appropriate for the soul in its approach to God than those in

Come, thou Almighty King,  
 Help us thy name to sing,  
 Help us to praise!  
 Father all-glorious,  
 O’er all victorious,  
 Come, and reign over us,  
 Ancient of days!

Or that passionate appeal:

Draw near, O Son of God, draw near!

What greater fame does any man crave than to be the author of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul"? It is doubtless the most popular hymn in the English language and will be sung so long as human beings need a Saviour or the power of song.

*The Lyrics of Thomas Olivers.*

There is space in this study for only a brief notice of Thomas Olivers, one of the most heroic and interesting characters of early Methodism. He figured prominently in the Calvinistic controversy which divided the leaders during the early days. Wesley pronounced him a full match for Toplady, and Southey acknowledges his great ability as displayed in that controversy. His poetry and music both bear testimony to his genius. He produced one of the sublimest lyrics in the hymnology of our language. He was one of the noblest trophies of Methodism and an astonishing demonstration of its power. In one of the issues of *Wesley's Magazine* is an autobiographical sketch marked throughout by the individuality of his character. For about forty-six years Thomas Olivers belonged to Wesley's itinerant ranks, doing most valiant and valuable service and enduring severe hardships in England, Ireland, and Scotland. But while the heroic man was toiling through his humble work his grand hymns were being sung in the great churches of the nation. Dr. Jackson says that Olivers's "Hymn of Praise to Christ" was set to music by a gentleman in Ireland and performed before the Bishop of Waterford in his cathedral on Christmas Day. Belcher in his "Historical Sketches of Hymns" says that the celebrated Mrs. Carter heard Olivers's hymn, "Lo! he comes with clouds descending," sung at St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, as an Advent anthem, and gives it at full length in her "Letters." Creamer in his "Hymnology" affirms that there is not in the language a hymn which has elicited more praise

than his "God of Abraham." James Montgomery in his "Christian Psalmist" says that there is not in all our language a lyric of more majestic style, more elevated thought, or more glorious imagery. *Blackwood's Magazine* pronounced this hymn one of the noblest odes in the English language.

In addition to the hymns of his already mentioned may be given "O thou God of my salvation" and "The God who reigns on high."

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What was one of the most important products of the Wesleyan revival?
2. What inspired the songs of Methodism?
3. When and where was the first Methodist hymn book issued?
4. What is said of John Wesley as a poet?
5. Who is Methodism's greatest lyric poet?
6. What are the chief characteristics of Charles Wesley's hymns?
7. In what respect is Charles Wesley superior to Isaac Watts?
8. What is said of the extent of Charles Wesley's hymn-writing?
9. What do you consider his greatest hymn?
10. What is said of the work of Thomas Olivers?

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CHAPTER V.  
PULPIT ORATORY.





## CHAPTER V.

### PULPIT ORATORY.

METHODISM has a most remarkable record in the production of pulpit oratory. In fact, its early history was so marked by the number of its brilliant pulpit orators as to open a new era of popular eloquence. The magic style and graceful manners, as well as the extemporaneous method of delivery, of the itinerants so captivated the public mind that all classes of speakers, excepting those of some of the smaller religious bodies, were compelled by pressure of the general taste to follow their example. The beautiful diction and graceful delivery of Whitefield and Punshon and Moffitt and Fisk and Cookman and Bascom and Pierce and Olin and Cross and a host of others too numerous to mention set the pace in pulpit activity for the age.

There was John Wesley, whose other powers were so brilliant and whose other achievements were so marvelous that his eloquence has received little consideration, and yet Southey bears distinct and repeated testimony to his ability as a public speaker and his fluency of delivery.

Thomas Walsh was not only a man of scholarly attainments, but he was an orator of attractive delivery. He was surrounded by a number of similar stamp who were distinguished for superiority in this line of achievement.

Then there was Joseph Benson, whose burning but tempered eloquence, according to the statements of his contemporaries, was the wonder and delight of his hearers; and Richard Watson, characterized by clear statement, close argumentation, and luminous illustration, whose discourses are still read as among the ablest in the English language. Other representatives of the orators of English Methodism are Rev. Drs. Newton, Bunton, Dixon, and Arthur. Dr.

Arthur and Dr. Punshon, the latter of whom has already been mentioned, were distinguished for the character of their public deliverances, and their appearance was ever an assurance of a large assembly.

Turning to American Methodism, we find a great host of men whose oratory elicited the admiration and commendation of vast multitudes of entranced listeners. There was William McKendree, who, though not widely known to the literary and scientific circles, stood at the head of pulpit orators of his day. Few men ever filled the pulpit with greater dignity and usefulness. To his class belonged Jesse Lee, Freeborn Garrettson, and Nathan Bangs, who easily eclipsed the leaders in contemporaneous Churches. Following these were John Summerfield, John N. Moffitt, Henry Bascom, who were acknowledged models of eloquence. No unbiased critic would deny the claim to preëminence of Simpson, the impassioned speaker, and Pierce, the silver-tongued, and Olin, the Demosthenes of his denomination.

But this vein of our literary mine is so rich that this whole series of studies might be given to its development. We shall be compelled, therefore, to content ourselves with selecting a few of the nuggets for our purposes.

*George Whitefield.*

Following is the beautiful tribute to Whitefield by Rev. Dr. James Hamilton, of London:

Whitefield was the prince of English preachers. Many have surpassed him as sermon makers, but none have approached him as a pulpit orator. Many have outshone him in the clearness of their logic, the grandeur of their conceptions, and the sparkling beauty of single sentences; but in the power of darting the gospel direct into the conscience he eclipsed them all. With a full and beaming countenance and the frank and easy port which the English people love—for it is the symbol of earnest purpose and friendly assurance—he combined a voice of rich compass which could easily thrill over Moorefield's in musical thunder or whisper its terrible secret in every ear, and to this gainly aspect and tuneful voice he

added a most eloquent and expressive action. Improved by conscientious practice and instinct with his earnest nature, this elocution was the acted sermon and by its pantomimic portrait enabled the eye to anticipate each rapid utterance and helped the memory to treasure up the palatable ideas. None ever used so boldly nor with more success the highest styles of impersonation as when he described to his sailor audience a storm at sea and compelled them to shout: "Take to the longboat, sir!" His "Hark! hark!" could conjure up Gethsemane with its faltering moon and awaken again the cry of horror-stricken innocence, and an apostrophe to Peter on the holy mount would light up another Tabor and drown it in glory from the opening heaven. His thoughts were possessions, and his feelings were transformations. And he spoke because he felt; his hearers understood because they saw. But the glory of Whitefield's preaching was its heart-kindling and heart-melting gospel. But for this, all his bold strokes and brilliant surprises might have been no better than the rhetorical triumphs of Kirwan and other pulpit dramatists. He was an orator, but he sought to be only an evangelist.

The following is a paragraph taken from his sermon on "Abraham Offering Up His Son Isaac":

And here let us pause awhile and by faith take a view of the place where the father has laid him. I doubt not but the blessed angels hovered round the altar and sang: "Glory be to God in the highest for giving such faith to man." Come, all ye tender-hearted parents who know what it is to look over a dying child. Fancy that you saw the altar erected before you and the wood laid in order and the beloved Isaac bound upon it. Fancy that you saw the aged parent standing by weeping. (For why should we not suppose that Abraham wept, since Jesus himself wept at the grave of Lazarus?) O what pious, endearing expressions passed now alternately between the father and the son! Josephus records a pathetic speech made by each, whether genuine I know not; but methinks I see the tears trickle down the patriarch Abraham's cheek, and out of the abundance of the heart he cries: "Adieu, adieu, my son. The Lord gave thee to me, and the Lord calls thee away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Adieu, my Isaac, my only son, whom I love as my soul. Adieu, adieu." I see Isaac at the same time meekly resigning himself into his Heavenly Father's hands and praying to the Most High to strengthen his earthly parent to strike the stroke. But why attempt to describe what either father or

son felt? It is impossible. We may indeed form some faint idea, but we shall never fully comprehend it till we come and sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven and hear the pleasing story over again.

This masterly sermon closes with the following impassioned appeal:

Learn, O saints, from what has been said, to sit loose to all your worldly comforts and stand ready prepared to part with everything when God shall require it at thy hand. Some of you may perhaps have friends who are to you as your own souls, and others may have children in whose lives your own lives are bound up. All, I believe, have their Isaacs, their particular delights of some kind or other. Labor, for Christ's sake; labor, ye sons and daughters of Abraham, to resign them daily in affection to God, that, when he shall require you really to sacrifice them, you may not confer with flesh and blood any more than the blessed patriarch now before us. And as for you that have been in any measure tried like unto him, let his example encourage and comfort you. Remember Abraham, your father, was tried before you. Think, O think of the happiness he now enjoys and how he is incessantly thanking God for tempting and trying him when here below! Look up often by the eye of faith and see him sitting with his dearly beloved Isaac in the world of spirits. Remember it will be but a little while and you shall sit with them also and tell one another what God has done for your souls. There I hope to sit with you and hear this story of his offering up his son from his own mouth and to praise the Lamb that sitteth upon the throne for what he hath done for all our souls forever and ever.

*Stephen Olin.*

History affords no clearer illustration of the fact that in God's mighty movements the man and the crisis meet than in the case of Stephen Olin. The hour had arrived for the inauguration of Christian education in this country under Methodistic influences, and to this unique character belongs the enviable distinction of launching the enterprise.

During the latter years of his life Dr. Olin prepared and delivered a series of baccalaureate discourses and a series of lectures. The writing of the lectures was his closing

literary labor and their delivery his final public utterance. For pure and chaste language, lofty ideals, and overpowering reasoning they have no superior. It is passing strange that there has not been a new edition of these masterly productions. They constitute a precious legacy to students everywhere, in whose welfare he was always deeply interested. In them are embodied the mature thought and ripe results of experience of one who had thought deeply on mental and moral culture. They are the fruit of a quarter of a century of actual work in college halls, and deserve the most careful study by all young men who aspire after the highest.

From his great lecture on "Early Piety the Basis of Elevated Character" the following excerpt is taken:

This responsibility for the well-being of the race, which accrues to the young in virtue of their providential endowments, is devolved upon them by an inevitable destiny. They are the predestined successors of all who now wield moral influence and all who occupy positions of authority and power. They are moving incessantly toward this great inheritance, and the flight of years makes haste to bring them into contact with burdens and responsibilities which they cannot elude or devolve upon others. Those who are now young *must* govern mankind. They *must* become the teachers of the race. They must become the world's lawgivers and its dispensers of justice. They must manage its material affairs, must plan and prosecute its improvements and ameliorations, must conduct its wars and negotiations, must meet the unseen exigencies of the great future. God has provided no other teachers for that coming generation which in its turn is to occupy this great field of action and probation and to transmit to a still later posterity its character, its virtues, its vices, and its achievements. Were we able to divest this great law of human existence of its inefficiency as a hackneyed truism and clothe it in the freshness and potency of a freshly discovered truth, we should need no other argument to impress upon the young the duty of diligence and faithfulness in their vocation; for the young, though often rash and reckless of the future, are neither selfish nor malevolent. They would not trust themselves upon the inheritance in reserve for them without qualification to preserve and improve

it. They would not bring back upon the world the ignorance of the Dark Ages nor reproduce upon the face of civilized society the horrible scenes of the Reign of Terror. They would not tarnish the luster of our national character by deeds of cowardice, treachery, or dishonor. They would not give to the country a race of incompetent or profligate statesmen. They would recoil from the thought of occupying the pulpits of this Christian land, the strongholds of its morality and stern virtues, without the requisite qualifications of intelligence and piety. They would not dwarf and taint the public mind with a feeble, polluted literature, nor degrade the schools and liberal professions to which this republic looks for the men of the future—its orators, its teachers, its guides of the youth, and the leaders of its senates. And yet nothing is more certain than that these great interests, one and all, look to the present generation of young men as their sole hope and resource. Nothing is less a matter of doubt than that these potent agencies on which the well-being of a great nation depends must speedily come under the direction of the young men who are now forming their character, moral and intellectual, in our schools and colleges.

*William Elbert Munsey.*

Perhaps no man was ever more entitled to the honor of being called self-made than Dr. Munsey. He was born amid the mountains of Southwest Virginia, and his boyhood days were spent on the farm. He knew by actual experience the drudgery of life on a mountain farm. It is said that often after a hard day's work he would have to carry the wood for evening fires on his shoulder for more than a mile. At an early period in life he was seized with a passion for knowledge, such as occasionally seizes a youth in the midst of the most difficult circumstances. It was his custom while plowing in the field to place a book at the end of the furrow and upon reaching it to pause a few moments and read, and then absorb what he had read while proceeding with his work. This eager desire for knowledge increased until it became insatiable, and his growing soul panted for larger drafts at the fountain of truth. He joined the ministry in early manhood, and soon his learning and eloquence

began to attract attention. Soon after the close of the Civil War he was stationed at Alexandria. Here his ministry was attended by immense congregations. Inspired by such crowds, the preacher was stimulated to the highest endeavor. His fame soon spread abroad, and he was in constant demand for special occasions. A writer who heard Dr. Munsey deliver the famous lecture on "Man" in the chapel of old Randolph-Macon College thus describes the production:

The vast amount of scientific knowledge he had stored his mind with was truly amazing. He spoke as if he had been a professor in every branch of science for a lifetime. Every technical term was at his tongue's end. Man was presented in spirit, soul, and body as the most wonderful trichotomy in the universe; was analyzed, synthesized, exalted, and glorified as the last and grandest work of God. He soared amid clouds as lightning and thunder and tempests; he was as familiar with anatomy as if he had been a Sir Charles Bell, with mental phenomena as if he had been a John Locke, with mythology as if he had been born a Greek and had lived in Greece a thousand years ago. After getting into his theme, he rushed on with the speed of an Arabian courser, scarcely pausing to take breath, to the last sentence of his gorgeous peroration.

In that lecture on "Man," after describing the chain that is made of the spiritual and the material, he says:

Behold the chain! First, as a chain of being—its archangelic links, its angelic links, its animal links, its vegetable links. Behold the chain in its original and unimpaired unity as on the sixth demiurgic day completed it dropped in order, symmetry, and light down through chaos and darkness, with the eye of God flashing down its entire length, kindling every link into beauty and glory. From Deity to dust, down, down it descended, and to and fro it swung, instinct with harmony, a tuneful chain along which diapasens from the softest note in sublime crescendo rose in thundering melodies to God. There it hung a thing of beauty, graceful, lovely, sublime, magnificent—the expression in the concrete of heaven's ideal, the embodiment in charming unity of Heaven's design, the incorporation of infinite benevolence, the central link, man and the little cosmos, wondrously compounded, in the meanwhile holding in lawful wed-

lock the spiritual and material, heaven and earth, God and rocks, together. There it hung, its highest link eclipsed and invisible in the splendor of the infinite glory, waning yet dazzling down to man, the subcentral and lower links scintillant and bright with the milder light of a created glory, declining softly to its lowest links, where worlds and stars hung appendant in twilight yet golden beauty—its highest link bathed in the splendors of noon, its lowest links slept in the lap of mellow evening.

*George Foster Pierce.*

Speaking of Bishop Pierce, General Toombs said: "He was the most symmetrical man I have ever known, the handsomest in person, the most gifted in intellect, and the purest in life."

Judge L. Q. C. Lamar said of him that of all the great Georgians he considered Bishop Pierce the first.

Governor Colquitt, who sat under his ministry in his youth, who entertained him, who served with him on boards of trustees, and who had abundant opportunity to know the Bishop fully, said that no man had ever done so much to mold the character of the Georgia people or so much to direct them in right paths.

Dr. Pierce headed the Georgia delegation to the General Conference which met in New York in 1844. While in that city the American Bible Society held its annual meeting, and he was invited to be one of the speakers. In writing of the address Rev. William Martin says: "I heard him in 1844 before the American Bible Society when Lord Ketchum, Frelinghuysen, and other distinguished men of the nation were the speakers, and from every indication, intense attention, frequent, loud, and long-continued applause, together with the many enthusiastic expressions I heard, the young Georgia Methodist preacher surpassed them all."

Perhaps no better illustration of the finished orator's style could be presented than the following excerpt from that famous address:



It is the sin of the nations and the curse of the Church that we have never properly appreciated the Bible. It is the Book of books for the priest and the people, for the old and for the young. It should be the tenant of the academy and of the nursery, and ought to be incorporated in our course of education, from the mother's knee to graduation in the highest universities in the land. Everything is destined to fail unless the Bible is the fulcrum on which these laws revolve. Can such a book be read without an influence commensurate with its importance? As well might the flowers sleep when the spring winds its mellow horn to call them from their bed; as well might the mist linger upon the bosom of the lake when the sun beckons it to leave its dewy home. The Bible plants our feet amid that angel group which stood with eager wing expectant when the Spirit of God first hovered over the abyss of chaos and wraps us in praise for the newborn world when the morning stars sang together for joy. The Bible built for us the world when we were not, stretches our conception of the infinite beyond the last orbit of astronomy, pacifies the moral discord of earth, reorganizes the dust of the sepulcher, and tells man that heaven is his home and eternity his Bible. . . . The Bible, sir, is the guide of the erring and the reclamer of the wandering. It heals the sick, consoles the dying, and purifies the living. If you would propagate Protestantism, circulate the Bible. Let the master give it to the pupil, the professor to his class, the father to his son, the mother to her daughter; place it in every home in the land. Then shall the love of God cover the earth and the light of salvation overlay the land as the sunbeams of the morning lie upon the mountains.

*Joseph Cross.*

In 1858 Mr. William T. Smithson enterprised and published "The Methodist Pulpit, South," a volume of which lies before the writer. In it are published specimens of sermons by distinguished Southern preachers, and for genuine pulpit oratory the collection has no superior. It might fittingly be placed in a "Library of the World's Best Orations."

One of these specimens is from Dr. Joseph Cross on "Labor and Rest." His text is: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep." A reading of the sermon in full is necessary to a proper ap-

preciation of it, but the concluding paragraph, which is here given, will suffice to illustrate the style:

Finally, my brethren, remember that in serving your own generation you serve also the generations to come. The seed sown in the present will bloom and bear fruit in the future and propagate itself in successive harvests forever. Your influence will outlive you, your work will remain when you are gone, and the good you shall have done will flourish over your tombs. David "served his own generation by the will of God" in the character of poet as well as of prophet and king; and this day a thousand temples are ringing with the voice of his psalmody and millions of worshipers are melting to the strains of his penitence, and, soaring on the wings of his piety and through the coming centuries, the saints shall still make these sacred compositions their songs in the house of their pilgrimage, and "the harp the monarch minstrel swept" shall still soothe the troubled soul and heal the broken heart and breathe its angel melodies over the bed of death and around the tomb of the departed, and "the sacramental hosts of God's elect" shall march to its music in the battle for the faith, and its living numbers shall modulate the movement of the resurrection anthem! Like David may you labor! With David may you rest!

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What effect had the preaching of the early itinerants upon pulpit oratory?
2. Who were among the leaders in this respect among the English?
3. Who were among the American leaders?
4. Who was the most eminent orator of early Methodism?
5. What were some of the traits of Stephen Olin?
6. What distinct work did Olin achieve?
7. How would Munsey be received in the modern Church?
8. How would you rank Bishop Pierce?
9. What constituted the attractiveness of Dr. Joseph Cross?
10. Does the public taste for oratory vary with different ages?

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 "Life and Letters of Stephen Olin."  
 Olin's "Lectures."  
 Munsey's "Sermons."  
 Pierce's "Sermons and Addresses."  
 Cross's "Sermons."

CHAPTER VI.  
BIBLICAL LITERATURE.



## CHAPTER VI.

### BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

FROM the very first, Methodism has put great emphasis upon the study of the Holy Scriptures. It will be recalled that Mr. Wesley was converted while listening to the reading of Luther's comments on the Epistle to the Romans. The "Holy Club," the nucleus of the coming Church, employed part of its time in the study of the Greek Testament. The early Methodist preachers were close students of the Word of God; but as their supreme business was the proclamation of the truth to the multitudes, many of them who were abundantly able to write books about the Bible had not the time for that work. But any one who has never examined into the situation will be amazed at the enormous amount as well as the great value of the works in Biblical literature produced by even the early itinerants.

The Bible is many-sided, and these zealous messengers whose highest ideal it was to preach the truth of God studied it until they became masters of its revelations and disclosures. The Bible is not only a book; it is a whole library within itself. In it all forms of literature are illustrated. Here we have history so accurately recorded that every new discovery of the excavator's spade corroborates its authenticity. Here we have the most charming biography in all the world, and in it we hold converse with the choice spirits of the race. Here we have the sublimest poetry ever produced. Here the great problems of philosophy are settled once and forever. And Biblical ethics have set the standard for all subsequent treatment.

*John Wesley.*

Though much attention has been given to Mr. Wesley in previous studies, it is but fitting that his expository writ-

ings be briefly noticed in this. He knew that in order to perpetuate the influence of the gracious revival that was then sweeping over the land it would be necessary to educate the people in the truths of the Bible. People can grow in grace only as they grow in knowledge. Religious fervor is evanescent unless fed by intelligent conviction. As in all his writings, the nature and limits of the Biblical writings of Mr. Wesley were determined by the needs of the people and the opportunities afforded for work. He said that his purpose was barely to assist those who fear God in hearing and reading the Bible itself, by showing the natural sense of every part in as few and as plain words as he could. "I have endeavored to make the 'Notes' as short as possible, that the comment may not obscure or swallow up the text." He wrote with educational and religious design, for he was conscious of the fact that there were many who were not only unable to buy extensive and expensive commentaries, but were not able to understand them were they able to procure the books. As already stated, his "Revised New Testament," which he made and used as a basis for his "Notes," anticipated every important change made by the modern revisers. Using this as the foundation, he then wrote the "Notes on the New Testament," upon the whole the most satisfactory one-volume commentary on the New Testament now in existence.

His "Notes on the Old Testament" were mainly an abridgment of Matthew Henry's "Commentary" and Poole's "Annotations." This latter work, being less original, never reached that degree of popularity attained by the one on the New Testament, which reached its fifth edition during his lifetime. His masterpiece in expository literature—"Notes on the New Testament"—was begun at an age when his powers were in their maturity, January, 1754. His health had been impaired by overwork, and he was ordered to the Hotwells, Clifton, for rest and recuperation. There

he began this work, which he says he never would have attempted had he not been unable to travel and preach but not too unwell to read and write. Entries in his Journal show how assiduously and painfully he toiled to elicit and express the truth of God as embodied in the Word.

*Adam Clarke.*

Adam Clarke was perhaps the most erudite man of his age. He was more or less familiar with every branch of learning. He became skilled in the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Samaritan, Chaldaic, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Coptic languages as well as those in Western Europe. His great abilities and achievements were duly recognized by membership in the London, Asiatic, Geological, and other learned societies of his age. The enduring monument of his industry, learning, and piety is found in his "Commentary on the Holy Scriptures," which "has spread its banquet of wisdom and love in untold Christian homes on two continents and is found in the libraries of ministers and laymen of all denominations." This masterly work was a leader in the critical study of the Bible, and as such had no successor in English until the appearance of the "International Critical Commentary," now being issued. In the production of this work Dr. Clarke seems to have explored almost every field of learning and lore and to have made every discovery tributary to his purpose.

The learned author's treatment of the Scripture is critical, exhaustive, and practical. Take as an illustration his treatment of the first Psalm. After a brief introduction, we have three pages of notes or comments and at the close an analysis which for comprehensiveness and brevity at the same time has not been surpassed. Here is the analysis:

WHAT MAY MAKE A HAPPY MAN?

I. This question the prophet resolves in the first two verses:

1. *Negatively.* It is he (1) "that walks not in the counsel of the

ungodly"; (2) "that stands not in the way of sinners"; (3) "that sits not in the seat of the scornful."

2. *Positively.* It is he (1) "whose delight is in the law of the Lord"; (2) "who doth meditate day and night in the law."

II. This happiness of the good man is illustrated in two ways: (1) By a similitude; (2) by comparing him with a wicked man.

1. The similitude he makes choice of is that of a tree. It hath these eminences: (1) It is planted; it grows not of itself; neither is it wild. (2) Planted by the rivers of water, it wants no moisture to fructify it. (3) It doth fructify; it brings forth fruit. (4) Its fruit is seasonable. (5) It is always green.

2. He shows this good man's happiness by comparing him with a wicked man.

III. He shows the cause why the godly are happy, the wicked unhappy:

1. Because the way of the righteous is known to the Lord.

2. But the way, studies, plots, and counsels of the wicked shall perish.

*Thomas Coke.*

We are accustomed to look upon Dr. Coke as a missionary rather than a writer. Methodism was missionary from its birth. A creed that holds universal atonement and the possibility of salvation for every man is inherently obligated to offer it to all men. Believing that all men need the gospel and that the gospel is adapted to all men, the only reasonable conclusion is that it is incumbent upon us to give it to all. William Carey (peace to his ashes and honor to his name!) is usually called the founder of modern missions. But the facts undoubtedly justify the claim of Dr. Coke to this honor. It was in October, 1792, that Carey preached his famous sermon and issued his effective pamphlet. The sermon and pamphlet led to the organization of the Baptist Missionary Society. In January, 1784, Dr. Coke organized a missionary society among the Wesleyans and published "A Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathen." This was eight years before the Baptist Missionary Society was organized.



He was perhaps the most benevolent man of his time, Wesley alone being excepted. He gave not only his person and time and talents, but his immense fortune as well, to the propagation of the Methodist reformation. His writings furnish sufficient evidence of the fact that he would have been classed among the *litterati* of his time had his powers been devoted to that field of endeavor. His style is plain and unambitious, but often elegant, strong, and dignified. While it is apparent to all that the man who crossed the Atlantic Ocean eighteen times in the prosecution of his missionary activities and who had entire charge of the Wesleyan Missions at their most critical time could not have much leisure for literary work, yet in spite of this he became quite a voluminous writer. In conjunction with Mr. Moore, he wrote a "Life of Wesley" which soon took rank with the best memoirs of that remarkable man. His history of the West Indies is the work which perhaps gave him more literary prominence than any other output of his pen. It was a work of three volumes, containing the natural, civil, and ecclesiastical history of each island from the beginning of European settlement. In writing it he displayed great natural ability, wide research, and polished art.

But that product of his pen of most interest here is his "Commentary on the Holy Scriptures." It was begun at the request of his denomination and is one of the landmarks of the age. It is characterized by keen insight, deep spirituality, and refined taste. From some cause or other its real merits were never fully appreciated, hence it has never been classed among our most popular books on the Bible.

*Joseph Benson.*

One of the most distinguished names in the annals of Methodism is that of Joseph Benson. He was born in Cumberland in 1749. Even in childhood his manner of life showed deep seriousness, great intelligence, and diligence

in study, and he soon acquired proficiency in the Greek and Latin languages and in theology. While under ten years of age he formed the habit of secret prayer, and he dates his conversion in his sixteenth year. Becoming acquainted with Wesley's itinerants who visited his town, he became infatuated with their fervor and consecration, and he soon became persuaded that Methodism would afford him the greatest opportunity for usefulness. He proceeded to consult Mr. Wesley and decided to join in the new and mighty movement conducted by the itinerants. He was received into the Conference in 1771, and for fifty years thereafter occupied the most important posts of English Methodism. He was twice President of the Conference and from 1803 till his death, in 1821, he was editor of the *Methodist Magazine*. His writings contributed incalculably to that stability of theology and growth of intelligence which have characterized the connection. He was noted for his intimate and accurate knowledge of the Greek New Testament, the soundness and breadth of his theological knowledge, his quiet dignity, the wisdom of his counsels, and the eloquence of his preaching. But for present purposes his "Biblical Commentary" is of supreme importance. It soon became a favorite among the Wesleyan preachers, and for the devotional study of the Bible is not surpassed even by Matthew Henry's famous work. Horne, in his "Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures," speaks in high terms of Benson's "Commentary." It was based largely on Poole's "Annotations."

*Daniel Denison Whedon.*

Dr. Whedon was one of the most eminent preachers of American Methodism. He was born at Onondaga, N. Y., March 20, 1808. He graduated from Hamilton College in 1828, studied law in Rochester for a year, then became teacher in Cazenovia Seminary, became tutor in his *Alma*

*Mater* in 1831, and in 1833 was made professor of languages in Wesleyan University. In 1834 he joined the New York Conference, where he served till 1842, when he was transferred to the Troy Conference. In 1845 he was made professor of rhetoric in the University of Michigan. In 1856 he became editor of the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, a position which he retained until 1884. He died at Atlantic Highlands, N. J., June 8, 1885.

Dr. Whedon was noted for his vigorous and incisive style both as preacher and writer, and was overwhelmingly powerful in controversy. His "Commentary," consisting of five large volumes, illustrates all the characteristics of its able author. The original work, containing these five volumes, covers only the New Testament and is specially adapted for popular use. His plan projected, but executed only on the New Testament by himself, has been extended to cover the Old Testament, the volumes being prepared by various authors. The list on the Old Testament is as follows: Vol. I., "Genesis and Exodus," Milton S. Terry and Fales H. Newhall. Vol. II., "Leviticus and Numbers," Daniel Steele; "Deuteronomy," John W. Lindsey. Vol. III., "Book of Joshua," Daniel Steele; "Judges to 2 Samuel," Milton S. Terry. Vol. IV., "Kings to Esther," Milton S. Terry. Vol. V., "Psalms," F. G. Hibbard. Vol. VI., "Job," J. K. Burr; "Proverbs," W. Hunter; "Ecclesiastes," A. B. Hyde. Vol. VII., "Isaiah," Henry Bannister; "Jeremiah and Lamentations," F. D. Hemenway. Vol. VIII., "Ezekiel and Daniel," Camden N. Cobern. Vol. IX., "Minor Prophets," F. C. Eiselen.

#### *H. G. Mitchell.*

Dr. Mitchell's most noteworthy contributions to Biblical literature are "The World before Abraham," "Amos: An Essay in Exegesis," and "Genesis" in the series known as "The Bible for Home and School." The following from the

Introduction to "The World before Abraham" will suffice to give some idea of the purpose of the book:

In a recent issue of a popular religious weekly appeared the following: "Kindly give the name of some book on Genesis which treats it from the viewpoint of modern scholarship."

This item indicates a demand for commentaries on Genesis written in the light of the most recent researches into its age and structure. The demand is really widespread, as any one in my position can testify; but thus far but little has been done either in England or America to meet it. The editor to whom the above appeal was made therefore recommended a translation of Dillman's work, which, though very valuable to those who are prepared to appreciate it, is too large, too learned, and too expensive for most students of the Bible. This state of things ought not to continue. A desire to do what I can to remedy it is my excuse for putting into print the following pages.

The first part of my book is devoted to the Pentateuchal question, which I have tried to discuss with perfect candor and settle for myself as well as my reader in accordance with the evidence in the case. In the comments of the second part my object has been simply to interpret the text of the first eleven chapters of Genesis in the light of the theory adopted. The ideas thus presented are therefore not mine, but those which in a given case the author seemed to me to have intended to convey. If I have missed his meaning, I will cheerfully acknowledge my error and make any necessary corrections.

There are doubtless those who at first will feel that some of my results threaten their faith in the Scriptures. I can assure them that their anxiety is groundless, as they will discover if they will consider: (1) That the essential element in these chapters is not the things narrated, but, as I have more than once elsewhere intimated, the religious ideas underlying them; and (2) that these ideas derive much of their importance to us from the fact that they represent stages more or less remote in the process by which God prepared his people, and through them the world, for the supreme revelation of himself in the life and work of Jesus Christ.

In his Introduction the learned author discusses such topics as "Names and Divisions" of the Pentateuch, "Traditional Authorship," "Structure and Composition," "Age of Documents," and "Order of Compilation." Following this

is an interesting analysis of the book of Genesis. The comments are pointed and, as the author states, in keeping with the position assumed in the Introduction.

*Gross Alexander.*

At this point the writer is embarrassed. This embarrassment arises from two causes—Dr. Alexander is still living, and he is very near to us. But the character of his work is such that common justice demands that it receive consideration. He is, beyond all question, our greatest living exegete and expositor. The work to which special attention is called in this study is "The Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians." It is a brief commentary on the two Pauline Epistles and is a volume in the series known as "The Bible for Home and School," which is being issued under the general editorship of Shailer Mathews and which bids fair to be a most valuable contribution to the study of the Bible.

After a brief introduction to Colossians, in which Dr. Alexander discusses "The Colossian Church," "The Occasion of the Epistle," "Authorship and Date," and gives an analysis and suggested bibliography, he proceeds to present in admirable comments the meaning of the letter. In a similar way he treats the Epistle to the Ephesians. The commentary on Ephesians is in many respects superior to Candlish's work on the same Epistle, which forms one of the series known as "Handbooks for Bible Classes" issued by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh. Dr. Alexander's book deserves a wide circulation and will doubtless receive its just deserts.

*Miscellaneous.*

The purpose and limitations of this study preclude minute examination into this field of Methodist literature, and a partial list of the great number must suffice.

Hibbard's "Palestine" was a leader and in some respects

remains unsurpassed, and his "Psalms Chronologically Arranged, with Historical Introductions," reached a wide circulation and attained a considerable reputation both in England and America. James Strong's "Harmony and Exposition of the Gospels" evinces patient research and extended scholarship, not only in the original languages of the Bible, but in the whole field of Scriptural literature. Osbon's "Daniel Verified in History" afforded ample proof of the scholarship of the author. Cruden's "Concordance" was for many years the standard work of its kind. In his "Chronology" Rev. Dr. Peter Akers, whilom President of Hamline University, shows exhaustive and comprehensive work. His extensive learning and critical research are apparent, whatever the reader may think of his conclusions. He gives evidence of research in all the works on chronology and into all the methods of recording time, from Egyptian and Oriental writers to the Olympiads and *Urbs Condita* of the Greeks and Romans. His work was not inferior to that of Ussher or Hales or Ideler.

Strickland's "Manual of Biblical Literature," Strong's "Compendium of the Gospels," Buck's "Harmony of the Gospels," Larrabee's "Scientific Evidences of Christianity," Crum's "Lectures on the Beatitudes," Summers's "Biblical Atlas and the Scripture Gazetteer" must be noted. Among the more recent writers in this field there are three who must receive some further notice than mere announcement of their productions.

A study of Methodist Biblical literature, however brief, would be incomplete without some reference to Richard Watson's "Dictionary of the Bible." Fuller notice of his works will be given in another one of these studies, but reference to his dictionary properly belongs here. The book is remarkable for the amount and accuracy of the information it contains, for its exhaustive treatment of subjects, together with unexampled condensation. The work was a

leader in its field and at one time had a wide circulation. His "Expositions of Matthew and Mark" is a work of considerable merit, and it also at one time was in high repute.

A work of recent issue and one of exceptional value is "The Bible in the World's Education," by Warren. It contains a series of lectures delivered at the University of Denver on "The Wycliffe Foundation."

"Christ's Table Talk," by Bishop Hendrix, should not be omitted. The author's high attainments in scholarship and spiritual insight are well sustained in this book.

Another valuable book of recent years is Bishop Keener's "Studies in Truth."

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What has ever been Methodism's supreme book?
2. What of the many-sided character of the Bible?
3. What pioneer work in Bible study did Wesley do?
4. What is said of Adam Clarke?
5. How does he analyze the first Psalm?
6. What was Dr. Coke's distinct contribution to this department of our literature?
7. What great service did Joseph Benson render?
8. What is the special feature of his "Commentary"?
9. For what was Daniel Whedon noted?
10. What two modern writers of note are in this department?

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 See also "Miscellaneous," in this chapter.





CHAPTER VII.  
THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

THE crowning glory of Methodism is its sublime theology. There is in some quarters a sickly sentimentalism against creeds. But any man who thinks must have a creed. A Church without a creed is like a man without a skeleton, and a creed without a Church is like a skeleton without a man.

Methodism holds as fundamental the universality of sin and the universality of the atonement. It has ever moved through the world proclaiming to every man a free and full salvation. It holds the freedom of the human will; that a measure of the Holy Spirit's influence is given to every man, so that if he is lost it is not because Christ has not died for him, but because he will not accept. It teaches, furthermore, that salvation is by faith, that the state of grace is witnessed to by the Spirit, and that a state of perfection in love is a possible attainment in this life. We can easily see how a system of truth so simple and yet so all-comprehensive and so thoroughly Scriptural would sooner or later win its way in the religious world. Hence every vital change made in the creeds of Christendom since the appearance of Methodism has been in the direction of Arminian theology. An old-time Methodist's sarcastic representation of the theology current in his day runs as follows: "Religion—if you seek it, you won't find it; if you find it, you won't know it; if you know it, you haven't got it; if you get it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, you never had it." Methodism reversed this and said: "Religion—if you seek it, you will find it; if you find it, you will know it; if you know it, you have got it; if you get it, you may lose it; if you lose it, you must have had it."

The power of our theology lies in the fact that it is the

product of experience. It grew out of the divine dealings with the founders and leaders. The soil in which it germinated was the enriched consciousness and clarified vision of the men whose spiritual lives were under the direct influence of the Spirit of God.

Spirituality may be defined as the consciousness of the Divine Presence in the soul. The spiritual man is he who is filled with a sense of the presence of God and of the force of spiritual laws here and now, convinced of an immediate and conscious relation between himself and God. Mr. Wesley in his experience passed from a traditional belief in a mediate relationship with God, which was furnished mainly by the Church, to this living faith in the immediate relationship between the soul and its God; and his experience, which became for him a personal one, became also for him a universal doctrine. He believed that this experience was possible to the consciousness of all men, inasmuch as in all men there is a spiritual potentiality. Hence he felt it his duty as well as the duty of every believer to arouse men to this spiritual capacity and to personal and loyal acceptance of the truth. He believed that such an experience was not confined to the elect, as was held by the Calvinists; nor to the cultured, as held by the High Church people; nor to the morally cultured, as held by the Puritans. The story of early Methodism at least is the story of an earnest and persistent effort to prevail upon men of all classes to avail themselves of this glorious inheritance.

The Doctrinal Standards of Methodism are as follows:

1. The Twenty-Five Articles of Religion.
2. Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament."
3. Wesley's "Fifty-Three Sermons."

It is greatly to our discredit that we have no authorized statement or confession of the creed of universal Methodism.

Here is a concise statement of the main tenets of our

theology from the pen of George J. Stevenson, of London, taken from McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia :

1. That there is one God who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all things.

2. That the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments are given by divine inspiration and form a complete rule of faith and practice.

3. That three Persons exist in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, undivided in essence and coequal in power and glory.

4. That in the person of Jesus Christ the divine and the human natures are united, so that he is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

5. That Jesus Christ has become the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that he rose from the dead, and that he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

6. That man was created in righteousness and true holiness, but that by his disobedience Adam lost the purity and happiness of his nature, and in consequence all his posterity are involved in depravity and guilt.

7. That repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are necessary to salvation.

8. That justification is by grace through faith, that he that believeth hath the witness in himself, and that it is our privilege to be fully sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

9. That man's salvation is of God and that if he is cast into hell it is of himself; that men are treated by God as rational, accountable creatures; that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do his own good pleasure; that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; and that it is possible for man to fall finally from grace.

10. That the soul is immortal and that after death it immediately enters into a state of happiness or misery.

11. That the observance of the Christian Sabbath is of perpetual obligation.

12. That the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are institutions of perpetual obligation.

The late Dr. W. P. Harrison, Book Editor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, summarized the essential

doctrines of Methodism in seven short paragraphs. These of course do not include all the doctrines of our Church, but only the distinctive features which clearly define our status in the Christian world. They are in substance the body of divinity presented by the Remonstrants to the Synod of Dort in 1619, known as the "Five Points of Arminianism," to which the Contra-Remonstrants made reply in the seven points embodying the essentials of Calvinism. Dr. Harrison's summary is as follows :

1. The universality and impartiality of God's grace to man, as manifested in the atonement.
2. The freedom of the will and personal responsibility to God.
3. The absolute necessity of holiness in heart and life.
4. The impossibility of man's restoration to the divine favor and to a perfect life by his own power.
5. The perfect provision for every man's necessities in the plan of salvation.
6. The sole condition of entrance into this new life is faith.
7. The conscious witness of the Spirit to adoption into the family of the Divine Father.

Bishop Vincent, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, thus states the main elements of the creed of Methodism :

1. I believe that all men are sinners.
2. I believe that God the Father loves all men and hates all sin.
3. I believe that Jesus Christ died for all men to make possible their salvation from sin and to make sure the salvation of all who believe in him.
4. I believe that the Holy Spirit is given to all men to enlighten and to incline them to repent of their sins and to believe in the Lord Jesus.
5. I believe that all who repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ receive the forgiveness of their sins. (This is justification.)
6. I believe that all who receive the forgiveness of sin are at the same time made new creatures in Christ Jesus. (This is regeneration.)
7. I believe that all who are made new creatures in Jesus Christ are accepted as children of God. (This is adoption.)

8. I believe that all who are accepted as children of God may receive the inward assurance of that fact. (This is the witness of the Spirit.)

9. I believe that all who truly desire and seek it may love God with all their heart and soul, mind and strength, and their neighbors as themselves. (This is entire sanctification.)

10. I believe that all who persevere to the end, and only those, shall be saved in heaven forever. (This is eternal perseverance.)

Methodism has produced many great theologians, but the space at our command will permit the study of but a select few.

*Richard Watson.*

The first great theologian in the history of our Church was Richard Watson. Next to Adam Clarke, perhaps, is the memory of this man cherished by universal Methodism. His talents were of the highest order; and his literary attainments, largely the result of his own endeavor, rendered him equal to almost any enterprise in that realm. In all his works he displayed the marks of a scholar, a theologian, and a philosopher. In his breadth of view he has been likened to Bacon, and in his reasoning power he has been classed with Locke. Stevenson says: "Watson's character was one of great beauty. His humility and piety never shone brighter than at the time of his greatest popularity; and sympathy, tenderness, and strength blended in a spirit purified by fire. How many felt the power of his presence!"

He is said to have been a man of elegant taste, of a remarkably tenacious memory, great vigor of intellect, and unconquerable application. He was at home in theology, metaphysics, politics, and political economy. As a preacher he ranked with the best the age produced. A writer in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, in speaking of his preaching, said: "He soared into regions of thought where no genius but his own can penetrate. He led his hearers into regions of thought of which they had previously no conception; and

his tall and graceful form, his pallid countenance, bearing marks of deep thought and severe pain, and at the same time beaming with benignity and holy delight, served to deepen the impression of his incomparable discourses. The greatest charm in his preaching was its richness of evangelical truth and devotional feeling, and in those qualities it increased to the last."

It is to Watson that we owe the first systematic treatment of Wesleyan theology. His "Institutes," though not the legal standard of Methodist theology, has ever been regarded as the scientific and moral standard of our belief. The elder Hodge, in his great work, speaks of the "Institutes" as "excellent and well worthy of its high repute among Methodists."

In 1852 Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, characterized Watson as "a prince in theology" and the "Institutes" as "the noblest work in Methodism and truly valuable."

Watson's premature death was a source of universal regret, but his influence has been an abiding one and his memory a cherished one. His book, the "Institutes," is so large in size and comprehensive in treatment that it has never been in popular demand among the people at large. There should be a revised and condensed edition of it for general use, for every Methodist should be conversant with its contents:

Here is the author's advertisement:

The object of this work is to exhibit the evidences, doctrines, morals, and institutes of Christianity in a form adapted to the use of young ministers and students of divinity. It is hoped also that it may supply the *desideratum* of a body of divinity adapted to the present state of theological literature, neither Calvinistic on the one hand nor Pelagian on the other.

The reader will perceive that the object has been to follow a course of plain and close argument on the various subjects discussed, without any attempt at embellishment of style and without adding practical uses and reflections, which, however important, did not



fall within the plan of this publication. The various controversies on fundamental and important points have been introduced; but it has been the sincere aim of the author to discuss every subject with fairness and candor and honestly, but in the spirit of "the truth," which he more anxiously wishes to be taught than to teach, to exhibit what he believes to be the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, to whose authority, he trusts, he has unreservedly subjected all his opinions.

The book consists of four parts, as follows: 1. "Evidences of the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures." 2. "Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures." 3. "The Morals of Christianity." 4. "The Institutions of Christianity."

*William Burt Pope.*

Here we meet one of the choice products of Methodism. Dr. Fitchett says: "Methodism has produced two great theologians: Richard Watson and William Burt Pope. In many respects they are utterly unlike each other. Watson is inferior to Pope in scholarship and literary gifts. He knew little, for example, of the relation of human creeds to each other. The science of comparative theology was not yet born when Watson wrote. Yet what sensible Methodist would not be willing to have the creed of his Church judged by Watson's fine and luminous definitions? Pope, on the other hand, had the garnered knowledge of a great scholar with a strain of philosophical genius added, rare amongst theologians, and he keeps always in clear vision what may be called the interrelations of human belief. But both writers have the characteristic note of Methodism: its wise sobriety, its intense evangelicalism, which yet shuns the characteristic perils of evangelicalism. It is a theology which links doctrine to conduct. It abhors fanaticism. It has the salt of reality. Here are doctrines realized in human experience and tested by that experience."

Dr. Pope was for many years theological tutor in Didsbury College, where he had abundant opportunity to exercise

his marvelous gifts and to cultivate his special talent. His great work, "A Compendium of Christian Theology," consisting of three large volumes, gives us his matured thought in this field. For comprehensiveness of treatment and attractiveness of style it has no superior in the whole field of theological literature. While it is written from the Arminian standpoint, it is at the same time a thorough discussion of the whole realm of theological thought. In his "A Higher Catechism of Theology" the distinguished author has given the substance of the larger work in catechetical form.

In the first volume of his larger work Dr. Pope discusses "The Divine Rule of Faith," "God," and "God and the Creature." Under the head of "Preliminaries" he treats specifically "Theology," "Revelation to Man," "By Jesus Christ," "In the Christian Church," and "Theological Science."

His introductory paragraph will suffice to put the whole situation before us: "Christian theology is the science of God and divine things based upon the revelation made to mankind in Jesus Christ and variously systematized in the Christian Church. All that belongs to the preliminaries of our study may be distributed under the several heads suggested by this definition, which is so framed as to include, first, theology proper; secondly, its limitation to relations between God and mankind; thirdly, its essential connection with Christ; fourthly, its characteristics as developed under various influences in the Christian Church; and, lastly, its title to the name of science. The introductory remarks which will be made on the several subjects have for their object simply to prepare the mind of the student for what lies before him and to give a few hints which will all afterwards be expanded in due course."

Defining theology proper, the author says: "God is the source and the subject and the end of theology. The stricter

and earlier use of the word limited it to the doctrine of the Triune God and his attributes. But in modern usage it includes the whole compass of the science of religion or the relation of all things to God. This gives it its unity and dignity and sanctity. It is *A Deo, De Deo, in Deum*; from God in its origin, concerning God in its substance, and it leads to God in all its issues; his name is in it."

In the second volume Dr. Pope takes up the subjects of "Sin," "The Mediatorial Ministry," and "The Administration of Redemption"; while in the third volume he continues "The Administration of Redemption," and finally discusses "Eschatology."

*Thomas O. Summers.*

Doubtless the greatest theologian produced by the Southern branch of Methodism was Dr. Thomas O. Summers. While professor of systematic theology in Vanderbilt University he delivered a series of lectures on the Twenty-Five Articles of Religion of our Church. After his death Dr. J. J. Tigert, who was then professor in the same university, edited Dr. Summers's manuscripts and issued them in two large volumes. Following is the title-page:

"Systematic Theology: A Complete Body of Wesleyan Arminian Divinity, Consisting of Lectures on the Twenty-Five Articles of Religion. By the Late Rev. Thomas O. Summers, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Systematic Theology in Vanderbilt University. The Whole Arranged and Revised, with Introduction, Copious Notes, Explanatory and Supplementary, and a Theological Glossary. By the Rev. Jno. J. Tigert, M.A., S.T.B., Professor in Vanderbilt University."

In the Introduction Dr. Tigert says: "For conservatism, orthodoxy, broad theological scholarship, and particularly for careful, conscientious, and patient study of all the elements of the Arminian system of theology—the system which gave such complete satisfaction to his head and heart

—Dr. Summers was confessedly without a superior in the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. From the separate organization of the Church until his death he stood over hymn book and Discipline and theological publications as the guardian of orthodoxy, saving the Church from the taint of many an incipient heresy. For seven consecutive years (1875-82) the material collected in this work was read as a series of lectures before the students of Vanderbilt University."

The work bears the marks of the scholar, the theologian, and the Christian. It must be read to be appreciated.

*Wilbur F. Tillett.*

Perhaps the greatest living theologian of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is Dean Tillett, of Vanderbilt University. For several years he has been dean of the faculty and professor of systematic theology in this institution. Naturally a theologian, he has here had abundant opportunity for the exercise of his gifts and endowments.

Dr. Tillett's most noteworthy publication is his "Personal Salvation; or, Studies in Christian Doctrine Pertaining to the Spiritual Life." The main title, "Personal Salvation," is really not descriptive of the character and scope of the work. Presumably the learned author selected this to emphasize the evangelical note so prominent. It is doubtless the best concise treatment of the real fundamental tenets of our theology extant.

Dr. Tillett says: "There are some doctrines of the Christian religion which enter but little into preaching. Their omission does not seriously affect the spiritual life of the Church, because they have no immediate bearing upon Christian experience. There are other doctrines which must be taught and preached everywhere, at all times, and by all preachers of righteousness. If they are not, Christian experience and the spiritual life of the Church soon come to an

end. The doctrines set forth in this volume belong to the latter class. They are the simplest yet most essential doctrines of the Christian system."

A careful study of this book would not only develop greater intelligence in our belief, but would at the same time greatly deepen the spiritual life of the people.

### *Other Writers.*

This chapter must not be closed without mention of Gross Alexander's "Son of Man," eloquent testimony to the value of which is borne by the fact that within a few years after its appearance the eighth edition had been issued; also Sheldon's "History of Christian Doctrine" and his "Unbelief in the Nineteenth Century," Banks's "Manual of Christian Doctrine," Haygood's "Man of Galilee," and Atkins's "The Kingdom in the Cradle."

The "Library of Biblical and Theological Literature," consisting of nine volumes and edited by George R. Crooks and Bishop Hurst, is a valuable set of books.

Ralston's "Elements of Divinity" is an admirable course of lectures, comprising a system of theology as taught in the Holy Scriptures.

### QUESTIONS.

1. What is the crowning glory of Methodism?
2. What is spirituality?
3. What are the doctrinal standards of Methodism?
4. What are the main tenets of Methodist theology?
5. Who was the first great theologian of Methodism?
6. What is his greatest work?
7. What other great theologian came at a later date?
8. What theologian of great merit did the Southern branch of Methodism produce several years ago?
9. Who is the present greatest living theologian of Southern Methodism?
10. What is his most noteworthy book?

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Crooks and Hurst's "Library of Theological Literature."

CHAPTER VIII.  
BIOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### BIOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE.

CHRYSOSTOM says: "The true Shekinah is man."

There are many channels of divine revelation. There is a marvelous revelation in nature. John Fiske, in his "Through Nature to God," says: "When we have once thoroughly grasped the monotheistic conception of the universe as an organic whole, animated by the omnipresent Spirit of God, we have forever taken leave of that materialism to which the universe was merely an endless multitude of phenomena. We begin to catch glimpses of the meaning and dramatic purpose of all things; at all events we rest assured that there really is such a meaning. Though the history of our lives and of all life on our planet as written down by the unswerving hand of nature may exhibit all events and their final purpose in unmistakable sequence, yet to our limited vision the several fragments of the record, like the leaves of the Cumæan sibyl, caught by the fitful breezes of circumstance and whirled wantonly hither and thither, lie in such intricate confusion that no ingenuity can enable us wholly to decipher the legend. But could we attain to a knowledge commensurate with the reality, could we penetrate the hidden depths where, according to Dante (*Paradiso*, xxxiii. 8), the story of nature, no longer scattered in truant leaves, is bound with divine love in a mystic volume, we should find therein no traces of hazard or incongruity. From man's origin we gather hints of his destiny, and the study of evolution leads our thoughts through nature to God."

Then there is the majestic manifestation made in history. Here we are constrained to acknowledge that "Eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness." Instead of history being "philosophy teaching by example," it is rather God

teaching the world by a system of object lessons in righteousness. With such a feeling history is a constant source of delight, and the vision of coming eras in anticipation is an unfailling force in the human heart. The student follows the majestic movements of history with a consciousness that they all point to a goal when right shall finally be triumphant. Like a seer, his eyes rest on that "far-off divine event toward which the whole creation moves."

But God's greatest revelations are made through personality. Carlyle says, "The history of the world is the biography of great men"; and Emerson says: "Nature seems to exist for the excellent. The world is upheld by the veracity of good men: they make the earth wholesome. They who lived with them found the earth glad and nutritious. Life is sweet and tolerable only in our belief in such society, and actually or ideally we manage to live with superiors. Their names are wrought into the verbs of language, their works and effigies are in our houses, and every circumstance of the day recalls an anecdote of them." He also says that the Bible cannot be closed till the last great man is born.

Personality is the greatest force in the universe. This is true in the material realm. All things material receive their values from the personalities associated with them. It is true in the realm of the intellectual. We are in the grip of the thoughts of the world's master minds. Every great movement, every great invention, every great achievement has been the result of a great personality. Our most valuable investment and possession lies in personality. In the realm of the spirit we are the beneficiaries of the prophets and the good and great of all ages.

Our embarrassment in this study grows out of the abundance of material at our command. The only thing to do is to give a suggestive outline that may serve the reader in further investigations in this field of literature.

*Biography of John Wesley.*

Of course the best sources of information in regard to the life of John Wesley are his own Journal and letters. In fact, from these two sources may be drawn all needed facts as to the main achievements of this life of wonderful activity. To these original sources all writers have gone for their data.

Among the older "Lives" of Wesley may be mentioned the ones by Clarke and Watson and Moore and Southey. Those by Clarke and Watson and Moore are sympathetic; while that of Southey is critical but luminous and, from the literary standpoint, admirable. Among those coming later are the ones by Stevens and Lelièvre and Overton and Telford, all having their respective merits; while that of Tyerman is monumental and bears evidence of immense labor in its production.

Two "Lives" of Wesley have appeared within very recent years that have greatly enriched this department of our literary possessions. One is Professor Winchester's "The Life of John Wesley" and the other is Fitchett's "Wesley and His Century."

Professor Winchester, occupying the chair of English literature in Wesleyan University, has brought together keen literary insight and admirable style. His book consists of nine chapters in which we have discussed the following subjects: "Parentage and Youth," "Oxford and Georgia," "The Year of Transition, 1738-39," "The Early Work," "The Extension of the Work," "Wesley's Private Life," "The Years of Success," "The Closing Years," and "The Man."

The work by Dr. Fitchett cannot be too highly recommended. It comes near reaching the ideal. It is not only a rehearsal of the main facts of the life of Wesley, but it is a philosophical presentation of Methodism. The title-page reads: "Wesley and His Century: A Study of Spiritual Forces. By the Rev. W. H. Fitchett, B.A., LL.D., Principal

of the Methodist Ladies' College, Hawthorne, Melbourne, President of the Methodist Church of Australia, author of 'How England Saved Europe,' etc.

The book is divided into five parts, and the following are the subtitles: Book I., "The Making of a Man"; Book II., "The Training of a Saint"; Book III., "The Quickening of a Nation"; Book IV., "The Evolution of a Church"; Book V., "Personal Characteristics."

The author's insight into the philosophy of history may be seen from the following paragraph: "And yet Wesley's true monument, we repeat, is not the Church that bears his name. It is the England of the twentieth century. Nay, it is the whole changed temper of the modern world: the new ideals in its politics, the new spirit in its religion, the new standard in its philanthropy. Who wants to understand Wesley's work must contrast the moral temper of the eighteenth century with that of the twentieth century, for one of the greatest personal factors in producing the wonderful change is Wesley himself."

In writing of Mr. Wesley's triumphant expression in death—"The best of all is, God is with us"—Dr. Fitchett says: "Death is the common, the inevitable experience, an experience clouded in mystery, and for the natural spirit dark with vague alarms. It is easy in some moods to ignore death, to forget its existence, to face it with recklessness. It is possible to drift into the unknown sea with failing senses and no sign of terror. But to die clear-eyed and glad, as Wesley did; to die with trembling lips breaking into praise and the undying spirit exultant with triumph; to put to that last and uttermost test of death all the beliefs of life and find that they are true—who does not envy an experience like this? The keen, swift, and unfaltering logic which Wesley used to defend the teachings and beliefs of his life is no more triumphant and final than the logic hidden in the peace of his death."

*Biography of Charles Wesley.*

John and Charles Wesley were united in heart and aim in life, so it is fitting that they should be united in fame and glory. Some one has said that John was the head and Charles the heart of Methodism. Of course the founder of Methodism will ever hold the chief place in the world's thought and admiration, but first among his coadjutors must be placed his brother Charles. He was the first member of the Holy Club at Oxford, the first to receive the name of Methodist, the first of the two brothers to experience regeneration, the first to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the societies apart from the Church, and the first and for many years the chief one to conduct Methodist worship at the regular Church hours. As stated in another chapter, the main ministry of Charles Wesley was in his work as lyric poet of Methodism. Henry Ward Beecher says: "I would rather have written that hymn of Wesley's, 'Jesus, Lover of my soul,' than to have all the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth. It has more power in it. I would rather have written such a hymn than to have heaped up all the treasures of the richest man on the globe. He will die. His money will go to his heirs, and they will divide it. But that hymn will go singing until the last trump brings forth the angel band, and then I think it will mount up on some lip to the very presence of God."

The life of Charles Wesley, while not so fertile a field for biographical writers as that of his more illustrious brother, has, nevertheless, received much attention. The reader may find material in Whitehead's "Lives of John and Charles Wesley," Stevenson's "Memorials of the Wesley Family," Adams's "The Poet-Preacher," Jackson's "Journal of Charles Wesley," and Dove's "Memorials of the Wesley Family"; but the standard "Life of Charles Wesley" is that by Rev. Thomas Jackson, D.D. There should by all means be a modern edition of this great book issued. In speaking

of it Dr. Abel Stevens says: "I cannot too strongly commend this book. It has been our best *history* of Methodism. It is to be regretted that the American edition omits many of its best specimens of Charles Wesley's poetry. The English edition is a mosaic set with the gems of his genius."

The following will not only show the style of Dr. Jackson but will also call attention to a vital element of the character of his hero: "The soul of Mr. Charles Wesley was formed for friendship. He possessed such a frankness of disposition, combined with such a warmth of affection and integrity of purpose, as at once commanded the love and esteem of all who were like-minded. His sympathies were deep and tender, so that his friendship was felt to be of inestimable value, especially in seasons of affliction, when help is the most needed. He was indeed 'a brother' born for the benefit of those who are in 'adversity,' and possessed great power to soothe and cheer. The pain and sickness in which most of his life was spent, the successive deaths of five of his children, added to the natural gentleness and tenderness of his heart, enabled him so to enter into the views and feelings of the sorrowful that they were at once strengthened and encouraged and blessed God for the consolation of which he made his servant the instrument."

#### *Biography of John Fletcher.*

Among the most noted of the early adherents of Methodism must be placed Rev. John Fletcher. He was a native of Switzerland, a graduate of Geneva, a man of eminent literary ability, and a Christian of spotless purity. He was an able and industrious writer, hence his valuable service rendered during the controversial period of the movement. Southey says that he was a man of rare talents and rarer virtue. No age or country has ever produced a man of more fervent piety or more perfect charity. No Church has ever possessed a more apostolic minister. It is said that as a

controversialist Mr. Fletcher had the double power of laying an antagonist at his feet by his great learning and logic and then raising him to self-respect and to respect for the system assaulted by the power of a beautiful charity that never failed. Wesley being too busy with the revival work, it fell to Mr. Fletcher to take up his pen in defense of the Wesleyan faith, which he did with rare skill and effectiveness. His most masterly work, perhaps, is his "Checks to Antinomianism," which left nothing to be said in refuting the attacks of Calvinists.

Joseph Benson is entitled to preëminence as the biographer of Fletcher. On the title-page we find these words: "The Life of the Rev. John W. De La Fletchere: Compiled from the Narrative of Rev. Mr. Wesley; the Biographical Notes of Rev. Mr. Gilpin, from His Own Letters, and Other Authentic Documents, Many of Which Were Never Before Published." Then follows the story of the saint of early Methodism.

In the closing paragraph are these words: "Anxious to the very last moment of his life to discharge the sacred duties of his office, he performed the services of the Church and administered the sacrament to upward of two hundred communicants the Sunday preceding his death, confiding in that Almighty Power which had given him life and resigning that life into the hands of Him who gave it with that composure of mind and those joyful hopes of a happy resurrection which ever accompany the last moments of the just." Thus he ceased at once to work and live.

#### *Biography of Richard Watson.*

No study of Methodist biography would be complete that fails to take note of the "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Richard Watson," by Thomas Jackson. In the Preface Dr. Jackson says: "In the following pages an attempt is made to trace the personal history of Mr. Wat-

son; and though the narrative has been compiled under many disadvantages, chiefly arising from the pressure of other engagements, it is presumed the work contains a faithful though inadequate record of his life and labors. The writer will always consider it one of his greatest privileges and one for which he will ever be thankful to Divine Providence that he was favored with the friendship of this great and good man and for many years lived in habits of constant intercourse and correspondence with him. They have conversed together on almost every subject of theology and of public interest as well as upon all the literary projects upon which Mr. Watson was engaged. To give an honest and just view of his habits, character, and opinions has been the writer's aim; but no one is more sensible than himself that his descriptions fall far short of the original. It would have required a pen like his own to do full justice to Mr. Watson's intellectual endowments and his great exertions in the cause of Christianity."

Concluding his work, the able biographer says: "Being now freed from the burden of the flesh, which had so frequently interfered with his mental exercises and with his active services in the Church and had so long proved a source of intense suffering, his sanctified spirit knows no more pain,

"And hears the inexpressible nuptial song  
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.  
There entertain him all the hosts above  
In solemn troops and sweet societies  
That sing, and singing in their glory move  
And wipe the tears forever from his eyes."

Dr. Jabez Bunting's "Memorials of Richard Watson" is a work in which the author exhibits great literary ability.

*Biography of George Whitefield.*

Another classic in this realm of the literature of Methodism is Dr. Joseph Belcher's "George Whitefield: A Biogra-



phy." Dr. Belcher states his aim as follows: "In the preparation of this memoir the compiler has sought to collect together incidents which might interest and instruct, especially in connection with Whitefield's labors in America, to present him as much as possible in his own dress, and to use the facts of his life to incite and cherish his own spirit, so far as he had the Spirit of Christ. Facts reflecting on the reputation and feelings of others have been used only as the interests of truth seemed to demand. It would have been easy to place on almost every page an array of authorities and to give here a long list of friends to whom the writer has been indebted for aid; but the sole object of the volume is the honor of Christ in the salvation of men, and that this may be accomplished we pray that the blessing of Heaven may rest upon it."

The author gives full particulars of that ecclesiastical farce known as the "Trial of Whitefield," which occurred in Charleston in 1740.

Another valuable work on the life of Methodism's first great orator is Dr. John Gillies's "Memoirs of Rev. George Whitefield." This book contains an extensive collection of the sermons and writings of Mr. Whitefield. This makes it a valuable book of reference, but rather voluminous for popular use. Any one who has the time to do so would render the Church a memorable service by preparing a modern edition of either of these books.

#### *Biography of Jesse Lee.*

When Colonel Hayne was twitted for letting his antagonist in the United States Senate put him to flight, he replied: "But it took Daniel Webster to do it." No doubt many a theological controversialist who met defeat at the hands of Jesse Lee, the apostle of New England Methodism, could make the same reply. In 1816 Lee died, leaving to the Church a legacy of Christian example rich in excellence

and replete with memorials of self-sacrifice and devotion. It was fitting that the record of such a life should be preserved to coming generations in suitable literary form. In 1823 a memoir of his life was prepared by one of his contemporaries, but the character of the work seems to have been disappointing to Lee's friends and the expectations of the Church.

The classic on the life of Lee is "The Life and Times of Jesse Lee," by Rev. Leroy M. Lee, D.D. It was published in Charleston, S. C., in 1848 by John Early for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"The times," says the biographer, "in which Mr. Lee lived and labored were full of interest. Methodism was then in its formative state. So also was society. They were adapted to each other. Both were young, ardent, and enterprising, 'rejoicing like young men to run a race.' The downfall of the English hierarchy, civil and religious, offered to both a career refulgent with righteousness and as boundless as eternity. They entered it, and the race was for immortality. Let the civil historian describe the brilliant course our country has run in giving to freedom a home. Ours is the less popular but not less valuable or useful duty of recording the career of a Church foremost in giving liberty to conscience and in carrying the joys of salvation to the weary and heavy-laden."

*Biography of James Osgood Andrew.*

No student of American Methodism, and especially in the most critical period, can afford to be indifferent to the story of Bishop Andrew. "The Life and Letters of James Osgood Andrew, with Glances at His Contemporaries and at Events in Church History," by the Rev. George G. Smith, A.M., is worthy not only of a place in every Methodist home, but of careful study as well.

The gifted and saintly Marvin was selected by the family

of Bishop Andrew to prepare his life, but he was sent upon a mission around the world before he could comply with the request. He died soon after his return, so that the material for the book was returned to the family. Dr. George G. Smith was finally selected for the work, and the result is before us. The voluminous writer has given the Church a most estimable contribution to our literature.

*Biography of John B. McFerrin.*

Methodism has never produced a greater hero than John B. McFerrin, and no one better qualified to write his life could have been found than Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald. The good Bishop says: "McFerrin will not lose by the perspective. He towers the peer of the greatest men of his day, and he will always hold a front place in the picture the Church historian will paint of the stirring times in which he lived and acted his part. The footprints of a giant will be seen by those who in coming generations shall trace his life, and at least the anatomy of a mighty frame will be left to posterity. Whether they will see the contour and color of life and feel the heart throbs of the living man depends mainly on what is here written."

*Other Biographical Writings.*

This part of our literary inheritance is so prolific that it is utterly impossible to give the barest outline in so limited a study as this, but the following must be mentioned at least: Smith's "Life and Times of George F. Pierce," Cody's "The Life and Labors of Francis Asbury Mood," Henkle's "Life of Bascom," Du Bose's "Life of Barbee," Wightman's "Life of Capers," Finney's "Life and Labors of Enoch Mather Marvin," Paine's "Life of McKendree," Fitzgerald's "Life of Summers," the "Life and Letters of Stephen Olin," and Du Bose's "Life of Joshua Soule" and "Life of Francis Asbury."

The "Autobiography of Peter Cartwright," edited by Dr. W. P. Strickland, is an interesting record of a man much of whose strength lay in his oddities and eccentricities.

## QUESTIONS.

1. What is the true Shekinah?
2. What are some of the mediums of revelation?
3. What is the greatest?
4. What are some of the earlier "Lives of Wesley"?
5. What two modern works are worthy of special reference?
6. Who was the first member of the Holy Club?
7. What is the standard "Life of Charles Wesley"?
8. Who was the most saintly man of early Methodism?
9. Who was the "apostle of New England Methodism"?
10. Why is the life of James O. Andrew of special interest to us?

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Smith's "Life of Andrew."

Fitzgerald's "Life of McFerrin."

CHAPTER IX.  
HISTORICAL LITERATURE.



## CHAPTER IX.

### HISTORICAL LITERATURE.

To the educated man there is no more interesting study than that of history. Dr. George A. Gordon, in one of his delightful books, beautifully describes the sphere of the educated man. He says: "The first thing noticeable is the expansion and enrichment of his interests. His sense of history is a constant source of comfort, and his anticipation of new eras that are coming is likewise an unfailing force in his heart. He looks before and after, and in a noble sense pines for what is not. His words in space and time are very grand, and his imagination is under the incessant and magnificent appeal that comes out of the great past behind him and the vast sky over him. Through the instrumentality of books he walks with the men who lived at the dawn of the world, when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. He migrates with Abraham, leads Israel out of bondage with Moses, is rapt with Isaiah in the vision of the eternal, goes abroad with the psalmists when their hearts are full to hear them break into song, listens to Jesus on the Mountain of Beatitudes, and keeps company with Paul and John in their great thoughts and enterprises. Or, striking out into another mighty civilization, he lives in the streets of Athens in the age of Pericles; lives in the wondrous beauty of Homer's world; opens his life to the appeal of wisdom, eloquence, art, poetry, and the thousand rich and splendid interests. Following his human sympathies, he sees Rome founded, looks upon Cæsar and Tacitus, wends his way down the long, dark medieval world, is present at the birth of the modern era, hears Dante sing, beholds Michelangelo build and Raphael paint, witnesses the magnificent pageant that Shakespeare puts upon the stage, and

enters into the new thought, the new science, the vaster life of to-day."

Moses Coit Tyler, in his Introduction to "The Library of Universal History," mentions the following as some of the benefits from the study of history: The exercise of the memory in retaining facts, the training of the critical faculty, the mental and moral discipline, the necessity of investigation in the realm not of the exact but the approximate, the cultivation of fair-mindedness as a habit, the enlargement of one's horizon, and the profit we may derive from the mistakes of others.

The devout student is ever conscious that he is watching in history the development of the divine ideal. To the superficial reader history may be an incoherent jumble of facts and incidents, but to the deeper student it is the systematic adjustment of the plan of the ages under a wise and beneficent Providence. The problem of the ages has been God's relation to the world and to human affairs. In the effort to solve it many theories have been evolved. The atheist cuts the question short by saying that there is no God. The agnostic says that we cannot know. The deist says that there is a God, but he has no connection with the world and no concern for man. The materialistic scientist says that God is simply the great First Cause. The Christian says that there is a personal God, both in nature and in human affairs. This brings up the doctrines of transcendence and immanence, and the great book of the future is to be written upon the reconciliation of the two. Here lies the foundation of our truth of Divine Providence.

The philosophy of history reveals the providential mission of Methodism. It marked the birth of modern missionary activity. It was the soil in which this long-delayed thought took root. Methodism was inherently missionary, as all true spiritual life is. Hence the Wesleys and Whitefield came to America. Dr. Coke, the founder of modern mis-



sions, fitted out his own ship and started to India, but died on the way. His heroic little body was buried at sea, whence the waves might wash his dissolving dust to the shores of all lands.

The history of early Methodism is found in the records of the great leaders who labored and suffered and died in the interests of the new movement. The original sources are found in the works of John Wesley, in the lives of Charles Wesley, Thomas Coke, George Whitefield, Richard Watson, and the various memoirs of the prominent men of that period. Perhaps the best history of Methodism in England is Dr. George Smith's "History of Methodism." It consists of three octavo volumes and is divided as follows: Volume I., "Wesley and His Times"; Volume II., "The Middle Age of Methodism"; Volume III., "Modern Methodism."

Those who desire to look especially into the history of Canadian Methodism will find G. F. Playter's "History of Methodism in Canada" very good.

Nathan Bangs's four-volume work entitled "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church from 1766-1840" will give information with special reference to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

*Stevens's "History of Methodism."*

The best general history of the Methodist Episcopal Church is the one by Dr. Abel Stevens. Its full title is, "The History of the Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century, Called Methodism, Considered in Its Different Denominational Forms, and Its Relation to British and American Protestantism." The work comprises three volumes. The first covers the period from the origin of Methodism to the death of Whitefield, the second volume covers the time between the death of Whitefield and the death of Wesley, while the third volume records the events from the death

of Wesley to the Centenary Jubilee of Methodism. The work is simply invaluable to the student of ecclesiastical history. It happily combines accuracy of statement with a most charming style. In the Preface the author says:

As a great religious development of the last century, affecting largely our common Protestantism and unquestionably destined to affect it still more profoundly, Methodism does not belong exclusively to the denominations that have appropriated its name. I have therefore attempted to write its history in a liberal spirit and to consider it not as a sectarian but as a general religious movement, ostensibly within the Church of England, at least during the lives of the chief Methodist founders, but reaching beyond it to most of the Protestantism of England and America. I have endeavored to keep this point of view till the movement was reduced into sectarian organizations.

I am not aware that this plan has been followed by any of the numerous writers on Methodism, Calvinistic or Arminian. It is not only historically just, but it affords special advantage to the variety and interest of the narrative; for whereas the Calvinistic writers, on the one side, have had as their chief characters Whitefield, the Countess of Huntingdon, Howell Harris, Rowlands, Jones, Berridge, Venn, Romaine, Madan, the Arminian authors, on the other, the Wesleys, Grimshaw, Fletcher, Nelson, Coke, Benson, Clarke, I claim them all as "workers together with God." And the marvelous "itinerary" of Whitefield runs parallel with the equally marvelous travels and labors of Wesley. Marking distinctly the contrasts of the Calvinistic and Arminian sections of Methodism, I have nevertheless been able to show that much more harmony exists between them through most of their history than has usually been supposed—that, in fact, the essential unity of the movement was maintained, with but incidental and salutary variations, down to the death of Whitefield. In this respect at least I trust that my pages will teach a lesson in Christian charity and catholicity which shall be grateful to all good men who may read them. And as it is more the office of history to narrate than polemically to discuss opinions, I have endeavored not to impair the much-needed lesson in my accounts of parties. It has been as impossible as inexpedient to dissemble my own theological opinions, but it is hoped that they will not be found unnecessarily obtruded. As the Wesleyan section of the movement was the most extensive and took finally an organized and permanent form, it necessarily takes the lead in the earlier part of

the narrative and almost exclusively occupies the latter part of it. I have endeavored, however, to give fullest attention, required by the plan of the work, to other Methodist bodies.

After describing the moral condition of England and the spiritual condition of the Church, Dr. Stevens says:

Such was the moral condition of England when Methodism came forth from the gates of Oxford, not to revive the ecclesiastical questions over which Churchmen and Puritans had fought and exhausted each other, nor even to appeal to the Reformation, with its incomplete corrections of popery, but to recall the masses to their Bibles, which say so little about those questions but which declare that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation"; that it "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Acknowledging the importance of sound doctrine, it nevertheless dealt mostly in the theology which relates to the spiritual life—faith, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and the witness of the Spirit. These were its great ideas, and never since the apostolic age were they brought out more clearly. Wesley formed no creed for the English Methodists; and though some of his writings are recognized in his chapel deeds and by the civil courts as the standard of Methodist doctrine, yet from their number and the great variety of subjects treated in them a vigorous interpretation of them is impossible. In providing an organization for Methodism in the New World, where it was destined to have its chief range, he so abridged the Articles of the Church of England as to exclude the most formidable of modern theological controversies and make it possible for Calvinists, alike with Arminians, to enter its communion. He prescribed no mode of baptism, but virtually recognized all modes.

Dr. A. B. Hyde's "The Story of Methodism" is an interesting record, fully illustrated.

*McTyeire's "History of Methodism."*

Here we have, not a history of Southern Methodism, but a history of Methodism from the Southern standpoint and by a Southerner. The work is the response to a request by the Centenary Committee, indorsed by the College of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It comprises "a

view of the rise of the revival of spiritual religion in the first half of the eighteenth century and of the principal agents by whom it was promoted in Europe and America, with some account of the doctrine and polity of Episcopal Methodism in the United States and the means and manner of its extension down to A.D. 1884."

The Bishop says: "Much the larger portion of the volume deals with that wherein all Methodists agree. I have endeavored to give, along with sketches of the chief actors in preparing and carrying forward the great work of God, the truths that were vital to it and the type of Christian experience developed by it; also the gradual and providential evolution of the system both in doctrine and polity, so that one who honors the book with a perusal may come to the end, not only with a tolerably clear understanding of the polity and doctrine of Episcopal Methodism, but, what is of infinitely greater importance, he may obtain some personal knowledge of that way of salvation which the Wesleyans teach. Moral or abstract truth knows no point of the compass; but historical truth does, and the truth of history proves this. Methodism in the South has suffered injustice from the manner in which it has been presented by learned, honest, and able writers in the North. The writer does not presume to be free from the infirmities to which he is liable in common with others. He proposes to tell the truth as he sees it, and this may lead him to tell truths affecting others which they have not seen and to present admitted facts in a different light. The reader is advised that this is not a history of Southern Methodism, but of Methodism from a Southern point of view. In the South Methodism was first successfully planted, and from thence it spread North and East and West. If all the members claimed by all the branches be counted, there is a preponderance of American Methodism now, as at the beginning, in the South."

In fixing his starting point the author begins by saying:

“It was not new doctrine but new life that the first Methodists sought for themselves and others. To realize in the hearts and conduct of men the true ideal of Christianity, to maintain its personal experience, and to extend it—this was their design, and their system of government grew up out of this and was accordingly shaped by it. The mission of Luther was to reform a corrupted Christianity; that of Wesley, to revive a dying one. Lutheranism dealt more with controversy; Wesleyanism, with experience. The abuses and errors of Rome, its defiant attitude, and oppressive rule made combatants of the reformers. Their prayer was: ‘Teach my hands to war and my fingers to fight.’ The Methodists came forth as evangelists. They persuaded men. With existing institutions and creeds they had no quarrel. ‘In their bosoms there was no rankling grudge against authorities; there was no particle of that venom which, wherever it lodges, infects and paralyzes the religious affections.’ Their controversies were not with Church and State authorities, but with sin and Satan, and their one object was to save souls.”

As to the origin of the term “Methodist,” Bishop McTyeire says: “No sooner had Charles Wesley become devout than he longed to be useful to those about him. He began to attend the weekly sacrament and induced two or three other students to attend with him. The regularity of their behavior led a young collegian to call them ‘Methodists’; and ‘as the name was new and quaint, it clave to them immediately, and from that time all that had any connection with them were thus distinguished.’ The first Methodists were the two Wesleys, Robert Kirkham, and William Morgan. To these were subsequently added Whitefield, Clayton, Broughton, Ingham, Hervey, Whitelamb, Hall, Gambold, Kinchin, Smith, Salmon, Wagon, Boyce, Atkinson, and others. Some of them made history. John Gambold became Moravian bishop; but, like the leaders of the Holy Club, it

was not till after years of laborious endeavor to establish a righteousness of his own that he was led to submit to the 'righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ.'"

A very interesting section of the book is that which treats of the "Christmas Conference," when the Church was organized in America. "On Friday, the 24th of December, 1784, the little company rode to Baltimore, and at 10 A.M. began the first 'General Conference' in the Lovely Lane Chapel." The Twenty-Five Articles of Religion prepared by Wesley were adopted; the Standards of Doctrine which had been received by the British Methodists were also adopted. The Conference adopted the "General Rules" and ordered that they be read once a year in each congregation, which custom prevails at the present.

Bishop McTyeire, though having a philosophical mind, was not wholly without the sense of humor. In connection with the record of Jesse Lee's visit to Boston he gives the following amusing incident:

One of them [the parsons of Boston] consented that Lee might preach in his church on condition that he should select the text and present it after Lee had entered the pulpit. To this he agreed. The matter was noised through the village, and the house was crowded to witness the discomfiture of the newcomer. The introductory service over, the minister handed Lee the text. It was Numbers xxii. 21: "And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass." The parson composed himself in his seat with a grim look of satisfaction. Being well acquainted with the story of Balaam, Lee proceeded at once to describe his character, descanting largely upon his avarice and love of the wages of unrighteousness, denouncing in severe language the baseness of the man who could use the prophetic office as a means of gain and could endanger the very souls of the people of Israel for the sake of the wages which Balak offered. He then proceeded to describe the oppressed, enslaved, and pitiable condition of the ass; spoke affectingly of the patience of the creature under burdens and spurs and whippings and abuses; said the ass usually endured without complaining at the abuse heaped upon him. Indeed, except the one in the history of Balaam, there had never been an instance of an ass speaking and expostulating under

ill treatment. He alluded to the saddle and described how galling it might become, especially under the weight of a large, fat, heavy man. At this point he cast a knowing look at the minister, a corpulent person. Having gone through with the exposition of the subject, he proceeded to the application. He said that the idea might be new to them (it had never struck him until the text was given him), but he thought Balaam might be a type of their minister. Balaam's ass in many respects reminded him of themselves, the congregation of that town, and the saddle bound on the poor ass by cords and girths evidently represented the minister's salary fastened on them by taxation. Its galling and oppressive influence they had often felt. In one instance, as he had been informed, the last and only cow of a poor man with a large family had been taken and sold to pay the salary of the well-fed incumbent of the saddle.

*"History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."*

The one particular upon which our young people are fearfully and wonderfully ignorant is the history of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. We should all be profoundly thankful that the prejudices growing out of the ecclesiastical rupture of 1844 have long since died away, and there should never be any effort to revive them; but the truth of history should always be maintained and our young people should be instructed in reference to the facts in the case and thus be enabled to understand and appreciate the motives that actuated our noble fathers.

Here is a volume that should have a place in every Sunday school and League library and should be read by every young Methodist. Its full title is, "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." It comprises all the official proceedings of the General Conference which led to the organization of the Southern Church, of the Southern Annual Conferences, and the convention which effected the organization. It was compiled and published by the editors and publishers of the *Southwestern Christian*

*Advocate* for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by order of the Louisville Convention, and was printed by William Cameron in 1845.

The purpose of the book may be seen from the following, taken from the Preface :

The convention of delegates from the Annual Conferences of the slaveholding States, held in Louisville, Ky., in May, 1845, after having resolved to organize the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, deemed it necessary to lay before the public a statement of the events which led to the formation of a distinct ecclesiastical connection and of the organization of that connection in order to a better understanding of the action, principles, and motives of Southern Methodists in the premises, and to preserve for future time a faithful record of those important facts which might now be collected with facility, but which, if not embodied in a permanent form, would be liable to be lost to posterity. In accordance with this design, the undersigned were appointed a committee to compile and publish a "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," under certain instructions given by the convention. They have accordingly endeavored in the best manner in their power under the circumstances to fulfill the important trust confided to them, and now present to the public the fruit of their labors.

The document is signed by J. B. McFerrin, M. M. Henkle, A. L. P. Green, F. E. Pitts, and John W. Hanner, and is dated December, 1845.

*Tigert's "Constitutional History of American Methodism."*

The untimely death of Bishop Tigert removed from us one of the most active and useful men ever given to our Church. He was a most vigorous and able writer, and his pen was constantly used for noble purposes. In another study reference is made to Dr. Summers's "Systematic Theology," which was edited by Dr. Tigert. Other important contributions to our literature from him are: "Making of Methodism," "The Preacher Himself," "Theism; or, The Paths That Lead to God," "Theology and Philosophy," and "The Christianity of Christ and His Apostles."



The work under review here is one, not for the casual reader, but for the student. It will never be one of "the best sellers," but will ever be in demand among those who wish to be conversant upon this phase of the development of our great Church.

*"History of the Revisions of the Discipline."*

Dr. P. A. Peterson, the author of this book, has rendered a valuable service to the Church. Dr. Robert Emory, in his "History of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," says: "There is internal evidence that the present Discipline was not all composed at one time. At what periods, then, were its several parts introduced? These are points not only of curious inquiry but essential often to right interpretation."

In the work under review Dr. Peterson follows the plan of Dr. David Sherman's "History of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," and uses as the basis of his work the Discipline of 1844. The book will never be in popular demand, but is absolutely essential as a book of reference to the student of our ecclesiastical legislation.

There have been issued from time to time histories of different Conferences which are of great local value, but which do not come within the scope of this study.

As a work for general reference Sheldon's "History of the Christian Church" is very fine.

QUESTIONS.

1. What are some of the benefits from the study of history?
2. Is all history sacred?
3. Was Methodism providential?
4. What is the best general history of the Methodist Episcopal Church?
5. What Southern bishop wrote a standard history of Methodism?
6. What are some of the characteristics of his work?
7. Is there a good history of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South?

8. What is our best constitutional history?
9. Where can we find the story of the revisions of the Discipline?
10. Has Methodism made a history worthy of preservation?

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CHAPTER X.  
METHODIST METAPHYSICIANS.



## CHAPTER X.

### METHODIST METAPHYSICIANS.

THE word "metaphysics" comes from two Greek words and literally means "beyond or after the natural." The word comes to us from Aristotle or his followers, who considered the natural bodies, *physics*, to be first in the order of studies and the science of mind or intelligence the second. Thus the term, meaning "after or beyond physics." Originally it meant the science of real as distinguished from phenomenal being; also the science of being as such as distinguished from the science of determined or concrete being, the science of the conceptions and relations which are necessarily implied to be true of every kind of being. It means philosophy in general, or the science of first principles.

Metaphysics is distinguished as general and special. The former is the science of being as being; while the latter is the science of any one kind of being, such as the metaphysics of morals. In popular language, however, all such studies as mental philosophy, psychology, philosophy proper, etc., are within this realm.

Sir William Hamilton, in his "Lectures on Metaphysics," says: "In considering the utility of a branch of knowledge it behooves us, in the first place, to estimate its value as viewed simply in itself; and in the second place, to estimate its value as viewed in relation to other branches. Considered in itself, a science is valuable in proportion as its cultivation is immediately conducive to the mental improvement of the cultivator. This may be called its absolute utility. In relation to others a science is valuable in proportion as its study is necessary for the prosecution of other branches of knowledge. This may be called its relative utility. In this latter point of view—that is, as relatively useful—I cannot at pres-

ent enter upon the value of philosophy; I cannot attempt to show how it supplies the materials or rules to all the sciences, and how in particular its study is important to the lawyer, the physician, and, above all, to the theologian."

He also says: "Now the various opinions which prevail concerning the comparative utility of human sciences and studies have all arisen from two errors. The first of these consists in viewing man, not as the end *unto himself*, but merely as a means organized for the sake of something *out of himself*; and under this partial view of human destination those branches of knowledge obtain exclusively the name of *useful* which tend to qualify a human being to act the lowly part of a dexterous instrument. The second, and the more dangerous of these errors, consists in regarding the cultivation of the faculties as subordinate to the acquisition of knowledge instead of regarding the possession of knowledge as subordinate to the cultivation of our faculties; and in consequence of this error those sciences which afford a greater number of more certain facts have been deemed superior in utility to those which bestow a higher cultivation on the higher faculties of the mind."

This brings up the whole question of education. Its purpose is not simply to render man more skillful in the use of tools or to render him more valuable in the money market. Its purpose is not to make a living, but to make a man. Hence education is that process of development, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, which qualifies man in all his powers and faculties to realize the end of his creation.

These studies would be incomplete without at least a glance into this field of Methodist literature. So here are a few nuggets which are gathered up and brought to the reader.

*Stephen Olin.*

Perhaps at the head of the list of Methodist metaphysicians should be placed the name of Stephen Olin. He has already

come before us in these studies under the treatment of "Pulpit Oratory," but he blended the orator and the metaphysician so wonderfully and unusually that he deserves notice under this department as well. His mental power seemed almost invincible, and his literary appetite almost insatiable. While in college he not only carried on his regular studies, but literally devoured books on various subjects; but his favorite line of investigation was in the realm of metaphysics.

He mastered Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" and carefully studied the various writings in this branch of study from Plato to the most recent German and French writers. He had in contemplation an extensive work on the history of philosophy, but failing health prevented its completion. By his peculiar mental constitution, by his method of intellectual activity, and by his universal information in this department of thought he was perhaps the best-qualified man for such an achievement that Methodism had produced.

Some insight into the working of his masterly mind may be gotten from a study of his series of lectures on "College Life: Its Theory and Practice." In the series there are seven lectures, as follows: Lecture I., "Importance of Understanding the True Theory of Scholastic Life"; Lecture II., "Motives to the Prosecution of Liberal Studies"; Lecture III., "Proper Incentives to High Intellectual Attainments"; Lecture IV., "Development and Discipline of the Mental Faculties"; Lecture V., "The Best Means and Instruments of Mental Discipline"; Lecture VI., "Offenses against Propriety and Good Taste"; Lecture VII., "The Formation of Character in College.

In the realization of the purpose for which the lectures were delivered the work is far superior to Hamerton's "The Intellectual Life," and as a book of inspiration to high ideals in college men it is perhaps without a peer. Here is an excerpt from the lecture on "Motives to the Prosecution of

Liberal Studies": "It is of the highest import to the student who aspires to the highest mental development and culture that he put himself at the outset in communication with motives the most pure and elevating and such as are at the same time permanent in their operation. I have already vindicated his entire freedom of choice and his unrestricted power to place himself under such motive influence as his own judgment shall approve. In default, however, of this voluntary exercise of his own discretion he will find that surrounding circumstances or sheer accident have supplied the deficiency and that he has already in motion, though little suspecting, it may be, the agencies to which he is indebted for overcoming his tendencies to congenial repose."

*John J. Tigert.*

One of the most mysterious dispensations of Providence was that which removed from us in the very prime of his life the scholarly John J. Tigert.

Among other valuable products of his pen may be mentioned his "Handbook of Logic." In the Preface the author calls special attention to the following features:

1. Many elementary writers on logic hasten forward to the exposition and illustration of the syllogism as if it were the whole of logic. This handbook, it will be noticed, is specially full in the treatment of the concept and the judgment. Here it is important that the learner's knowledge should be exact, truly scientific, and measurably exhaustive; otherwise confusion will pervade the whole subject.

2. The test of all knowledge is availability and use.

3. This treatise probably presents a more complete account of recent logical investigations and advances than any other one book of an elementary character at least.

4. It is thought that decided advantages will be discovered in the arrangement of the matter by those who have occasion to carefully analyze the contents of the schoolroom.

Following are the divisions of the book: "General Ground Work"; I., "The Doctrine of Concepts"; II., "The Doctrine



of Judgments"; III., "The Doctrine of Immediate Inference"; IV., "The Doctrine of Mediate Inference; or, The Syllogism"; V., "Induction and Method."

*Exercises.*—The subject is too abstruse for elaborate treatment here. It is a profound treatise on a profoundly difficult topic.

*Thomas Randolph Mercein.*

Rev. Dr. Dewey, an eminent Unitarian clergyman, in reference to the author under review, says: "I never knew a young man more fitted by natural endowments and spiritual gifts for the holy office he took upon him. He began to preach very young—at nineteen—and died at thirty-one. His remains rest in Sheffield and ought to have a monument. Beautiful in person, simple in manners, strong in purpose, and indefatigable in labor, in him were combined manliness, earnestness, and delicacy, with great strength and beauty of intellect. His work on 'Natural Goodness' shows what he was. I do not agree with his conclusion; but to the originality, insight, eloquence, and generosity of his writing no one can refuse his testimony."

Mercein's "Natural Goodness" has been compared in logical ability to Butler's immortal "Analogy," to which, in many respects at least, it is not inferior. The full title will give some idea of the scope of the book. It is this: "Natural Goodness; or, Honor to Whom Honor Is Due. Suggestions toward an Appreciative View of Moral Men, the Philosophy of the Present System of Morality, and the Relation of Natural Virtue to Religion."

The book first appeared about fifty years ago, and when it was first published Dr. D. D. Whedon said of it in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*: "One of the finest essays that ever proceeded from a Methodist pen is young Randolph Mercein's book on 'Natural Goodness.' Our belief has ever

been that, had his life been spared to us, he would have been about the brightest star in our intellectual firmament."

A recent issue of the book has been brought out which contains a strong commendatory introduction by Bishop W. A. Candler. The Bishop says: "During my first pastorate the venerable Lovick Pierce often warned me that 'the source of every serious error in theology will be found in false views of sin.' . . . This book is now republished with the desire and belief that it will contribute to the bringing back of this sense of sin and to the bringing on of the revival of evangelical religion for which so many devout souls are yearning and praying. It is commended especially to the ministers of all the evangelical Churches. May God bless it to the preachers of the present generation as he blessed it to the ministry of fifty years ago!"

The author discusses the following themes in his book: I., "Injustice Done to Moral Men"; II., "The General Unconsciousness of Deep Guilt"; III., "The Temporal Rewards of Morality"; IV., "The Comparative Rectitude of Human Conduct"; V., "The Natural Virtues"; VI., "The Relation of Morality to Religion"; VII., "The Religious Element in Human Nature"; VIII., "Religious Experience—Conviction"; IX., "Religious Experience—Repentance"; X., "Religious Experience—Faith"; XI., "Love to God the Criterion of Virtue"; XII., "Injury Done to Religion by Moral Men."

*J. W. Mendenhall.*

Perhaps the most elaborate work in this field of Methodist literature that has appeared, at least in recent years, is Dr. J. W. Mendenhall's "Plato and Paul; or, Philosophy and Christianity." It is a book of over seven hundred pages and presents abundant evidence not only of superb scholarly attainments but of heroic labor as well. The work consists of "an examination of the two fundamental forces of cosmic

and human history, with their contents, methods, functions, relations, and results compared."

Some idea of the author's purpose may be obtained from the following from the Introduction:

Evidently enfeebled as philosophy is by its necessary and constitutional methods, it may surprise the reader to be informed that the author's aim is in part to establish that Christianity may be amply justified by the philosophical method, and that its philosophical basis is as impregnable as the more common historical basis on which it supposedly and safely rests. It is altogether probable, therefore, that it will be inferred that if the philosophical method is insufficient for philosophical purposes it must also be inadequate in the hands of the Christian investigator for his purposes. Christianity has its theological argument—an argument strong, robust, granitic; its argument from experience the more decisive because the more philosophical; its argument from history a running fire burning up the wild guesses of materialism in its path and illuminating the heavens as it spreads over the earth; its latest work the best because the most distinctive and the most complete. While the theological, the experimental, and the historical arguments are involved in one another and constitute an all-sufficient defense of religious truth, the philosophical argument for Christianity is as important as these and as unanswerable, because Christianity is true philosophy or the philosophy of truth in a religious form. To meet the demands of the present day, this argument is emphasized in this volume more than any other, being rendered in such form as to make Christianity appear quite as much a philosophy as a religion or that the two are inseparable in Christianity. On this basis—the *scientific complexion of the highest religion*—we hold that Christianity may successfully assail the naïve materialism and popular agnosticism of the times. The conflict now raging is not so much a conflict between Christianity and another phase of religion as it is a conflict between Christianity and some form of philosophy.

While the book is profoundly philosophical, it is at the same time remarkably clear and at times charming in style. There are thirty-five chapters in the book, and among the headings to the chapters may be mentioned the following: "Plato," "The Corner Stone of Philosophy," "The Ground of Life," "The Area of Human Knowledge," "The Religious

Concept," "The Apostle Paul," "Christianity the Key to the Phenomenal World," and "Present Tasks of Christianity."

There remains space for only a brief quotation. Here it is:

*Christianity is truth.* Its mission is the propagation of truth, its inspiration is the inspiration of truth, its success is the success of truth. Let error tear down, the truth must build up; let the one agnosticize the world, the other must illumine it; let the one materialize the thought of men, the other must spiritualize it; let the one drive the world into Plato's cave, the other must draw all men into Christ's kingdom; let the one actualize an anarchy of letters, the other must establish a republic of immortal truths.

H. H. Moore.

The title-page of Dr. Moore's interesting book bears these words: "The Anatomy of Atheism as Demonstrated in the Light of the Constitution and Laws of Nature." The reader can readily see what a task the bold writer has mapped out for himself. Here is what the author says about it:

Infidel arguments, it matters not how old they may be, if presented in a new dress, should receive such attention as the spirit of the times demands. The task we undertook to perform was somewhat difficult. It was important that we keep in sight of the game we were pursuing or at least keep on its sinuous and meandering track, and at the same time put in logical order a thread of argument for the defense of the faith of our fathers. Could we have found in our library even the main reasons for accepting Christ as our Messiah here spread before the reader, this volume would not have appeared. We have kept constantly before us the average reader who would likely be interested in such subjects and have written for the express purpose of giving him some assistance in his troubles.

Dr. Moore is an adept in the use of the surgeon's knife, and in this volume he lays bare the whole anatomy of atheism. One slash of his knife reveals this:

We are therefore led to conclude that atheism more than any other form of unbelief has a subjective origin; that is a device

invented by the mind to close up a conscious vacuum that is there. It is humanity giving the lie to itself, wriggling to become what it was not intended to be, and in this way it affords proof of a diseased or deranged nature. It is an attempt to suppress or to smother out of existence, or at least render inactive, the powers of the mind which with great force have led all races of the human family devoutly to recognize a Supreme Being. All idea of responsibility for the secret thoughts and purposes of the mind can be got rid of only as the existence of a God is denied. And success in this undertaking, were it possible, would react in the greatest moral calamity that could come upon us. Atheism leaves the inward man a desolation, solitary and alone. It renders impossible all conceptions of holiness which is free from the taint of impurity.

*Borden P. Bowne.*

One of the strongest and most prolific writers in this department of Methodist literature was the late Dr. Borden P. Bowne. The limits of this study will admit of only slight mention of him and his work. The following are his published works: "The Atonement," "Christian Life," "Christian Revelation," "Ethical Legislation by the Church," "Introduction to Psychology," "Metaphysics," "Philosophy of Spencer," "Philosophy of Theism," "Principles of Ethics," "Studies in Theism," "Theory of Thought," and various magazine articles. In Professor Bowne the highest type of scholarship and clear Christian experience seem to have been beautifully blended. In the last address he ever delivered, which was made before a body of ministers, he said: "We are going to be through with this life before very long. The longest life is short when it is over; any time is short when it is done. The gates of time will swing to behind you before long; they will swing to behind some of us soon, but behind all of us before long. And then the important thing will not be what appointments we had or what rank in the Conference or anything of that sort; not what men thought of us, but what *He* thought of us and whether we were built into *His* kingdom. And if at the end of it all we emerge from

life's work and discipline crowned souls, at home anywhere in God's universe, life will have been a success."

*Eugene Russell Hendrix.*

Bishop Eugene R. Hendrix delivered "The Quillian Lectures" for 1903 at Emory College. He chose as his subject "The Personality of the Holy Spirit." The course consisted of five lectures, and the subtopics were the following: I., "The Power of Personality"; II., "The Personality of the Holy Spirit"; III., "The Holy Spirit the Author of Sacred Letters"; IV., "The Spirit the Executive of the Godhead"; V., "The Deity of the Holy Spirit." The lecture on "The Power of Personality" is a masterpiece.

This study must not close without mention of Smith's "Elements of Mental Science," also Clark's "Mental Discipline."

With some latitude in application Bishop Bascom's "Lectures" could be classified here.

"Theism: A Survey of the Paths That Lead to God," by the late Bishop John J. Tigert, is a work of considerable merit.

QUESTIONS.

1. What does "metaphysics" mean?
2. What two values has every branch of knowledge?
3. From what two errors have the various opinions concerning the comparative utility of human sciences arisen?
4. Who heads the list of Methodist metaphysicians?
5. Where may we find illustrations of the workings of his masterly mind?
6. Of what great scholar was the Church deprived by a mysterious providence?
7. To what four features does Tigert call attention in his work on logic?
8. What of Thomas Randolph Mercein?
9. What great book was written by Dr. J. W. Mendenhall?
10. What metaphysical book by Bishop Hendrix?

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Bowne's "Works."  
Hendrix's "Lectures."  
Bascom's "Lectures."





CHAPTER XI.

THE JOURNAL OF FRANCIS ASBURY.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE JOURNAL OF FRANCIS ASBURY.

IN the brilliant galaxy of heroic Methodist itinerants there is not one more worthy of our admiration and emulation than Francis Asbury. He was born in Handsworth, Staffordshire, England, August 20, 1745, and had the great fortune of being trained by pious parents who were members of the Methodist Society. At an early age he was placed in a good school, and at the age of six he began to read the Bible regularly, with the historical parts of which he says he was greatly delighted. At the age of fourteen years he was apprenticed to learn the business of making "buckle shapes." While serving this apprenticeship he was permitted to hear such preachers as Ryland, Stillingfleet, Talbott, Hawes, and Venn, who were among the distinguished men of the English pulpit. When about fourteen years old he was converted and began a course in theological studies which he pursued during his leisure hours. When sixteen years old he began the exercise of his gifts by holding prayer services in his native village and other places, and at eighteen he was licensed to preach. The fervency and eloquence of his preaching attracted old and young, and multitudes gladly heard him. Besides attending to his ordinary duties during the week, he preached not only on Sundays but frequently three or four times in between, until his reception into the Conference of the Wesleyan Church at the age of twenty-one.

From the very beginning Mr. Asbury was noted for his strict devotion to the ministry and the faithful discharge of all the duties connected with this holy work. He determined to become thoroughly familiar with all the doctrines of the Church to which he had devoted his life, and with his enlarged knowledge came warmer admiration and adherence. In the year 1771 he became thoroughly convinced of a di-

vine call to be a missionary to America, to which country Mr. Wesley had sent two ministers two years before. At the Conference of this year Mr. Wesley called for volunteers, and Mr. Asbury offered his services.

Having been accepted, he sailed from Bristol in company with Richard Wright, a minister of one year's standing, on the 4th of September and arrived at Philadelphia on the 27th of October. During the voyage, which was a long and disagreeable one, he divided his time between reading theological books and conversing with the sailors and his fellow passengers.

After the Revolutionary War broke out, Mr. Rankin and nearly all those who had come from England left their work here and returned to their old home. On the other hand, Mr. Asbury had become very much attached to the interests of the Western Continent and deeply sympathized with the people. He felt that it would be wrong to leave the people here who had put themselves under the care of Methodist preachers, and, having confidence in the cause for which the colonists were struggling, he was unwilling to go away.

The close of the Revolutionary War brought a crisis in the Wesleyan movement in this country. The Societies desired the administration of the sacraments. Hitherto they had been regarded as affiliating with the Church of England. Their preachers had been regarded as laymen, while the people had received baptism and the Lord's Supper at the parish churches. But during the war the clergymen of the Church of England generally fled from the country, the churches were unoccupied, and there were none to administer the sacraments. Some of the Wesleyan preachers wanted to elect and ordain men of their own number for this purpose, but Mr. Asbury stoutly resisted this until Mr. Wesley could be heard from. The matter was laid before Mr. Wesley, who, after due deliberation upon the precarious situation, decided to take the necessary steps for the organization

of the American Societies into a separate Church. Accordingly, with the assistance of several clergymen in England, he set apart Dr. Coke for the office of superintendent, ordaining him according to the form for the ordination of bishops in the Church of England. He also ordained two elders, sending them with Dr. Coke to America with directions to ordain Mr. Asbury as joint superintendent, or bishop.

A Conference was convened in Baltimore on Christmas, 1784, a Church was organized which, by the unanimous consent of the preachers present, was called "The Methodist Episcopal Church," and Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury were elected superintendents, or bishops. Mr. Asbury was ordained by Dr. Coke, assisted by Rev. Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey, who had been ordained in England.

From that time forward the life of Bishop Asbury was one of constant activities and ever-increasing care. His travels extended from Maine to Georgia, and, crossing the mountains, he kept up with the tide of population flowing westward and southward.

Bishop Asbury was a man of deep thought and wise conclusions. He had unusual power of insight into human character. He was a man of uniform piety and powerful convictions. When convinced of duty, no perils, however great, could divert him from his purpose. In passing through the Indian country west of the mountains he often camped in the wilderness, where no one ventured to sleep except under the protection of a trustworthy sentinel. He manifested a zeal apostolic in nature and an industry and patience almost unrivaled. Though a constant traveler, he read most of the valuable books of the day. He had a fair knowledge of the original tongues of the Scriptures, and was a remarkably sound and accurate theologian. As a preacher he was clear, forceful, and earnest; as an executive officer he possessed exceptional powers.

His Journal contains the outline of his wonderful record. To that let us now turn our attention. In the Preface to the first number of the second volume of his Journal, published during his lifetime, Mr. Asbury says:

In the month of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one, I embarked in England for America, at which time the memoirs I have written of my life commenced. As I considered my station on the American Continent in the order of Divine Providence as a station in which I should frequently be exposed to censure and jealousy, I thought it highly expedient for my own satisfaction and the confirmation of my friends to keep an impartial diary of my intentions, resolutions, and actions as a Christian and minister, that I might have through this medium a constant and reasonable answer for mine accusers. From the nature and design of the work it must have in it many things both unpleasant and uninteresting to curious and critical readers, and perhaps some things exceptional even to those who enter into its spirit and read it with affection.

From the very beginning of his ministry Mr. Asbury seems to have been plastic to the impressions of the Holy Spirit and ready to obey the orders of Heaven as indicated in providential leadings. In the very first paragraph of the Journal we get a glimpse into the inner spirit of the man:

On the 7th of August, 1771, the Conference began at Bristol, in England. Before this I had felt for half a year strong intimations in my mind that I should visit America, which I laid before the Lord, being unwilling to do my own will or to run before I was sent. During this time my trials were very great, which the Lord, I believe, permitted to prove and try me in order to prepare me for future usefulness. At the Conference it was proposed that some preachers should go over to the American Continent. I spoke my mind and made an offer of myself. I was accepted by Mr. Wesley and others who judged I had a call. From Bristol I went home to acquaint my parents with my great undertaking, which I opened in as gentle a manner as possible. Though it was grievous to flesh and blood, they consented to let me go. My mother is one of the tenderest parents in the world, but I believe she was blessed in the present instance with divine assistance to part with me. I visited most of my friends in Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Gloucester-

shire and felt much life and power among them. Several of our meetings were indeed held in the spirit and life of God. Many of my friends were struck with wonder when they heard of my going; but none opened their mouths against it, hoping that it was of God. Some wished that their situation would allow them to go with me.

Mr. Asbury evidently examined into the motives actuating him in his new enterprise, as the following entry will show:

*Thursday, 12th.*—I will set down a few things that lie on my mind. Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my heart. To get money? No; I am going to live for God and to bring others to do so. In America there has been a work of God, some moving first among the Friends, but in time it declined; likewise by the Presbyterians, but amongst them also it declined. The people God owns in England are the Methodists. The doctrines they preach and the discipline they enforce are, I believe, the purest of any people now in the world. The Lord has greatly blessed these doctrines and this discipline in three kingdoms; they must therefore be pleasing to him. If God does not acknowledge me in America, I will soon return to England. I know my views are upright now. May they never be otherwise!

Some things were at the beginning of his ministry fixed once for all. Listen:

*Thursday, 22d.*—At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality. I have nothing to seek but the glory of God, nothing to fear but his displeasure. I am come over with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear. I am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches; nor will I ever fear (the Lord helping me) the face of man or know any man after the flesh, if I beg my bread from door to door; but whomsoever I please or displease, I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul.

So the disposition "to remain in the cities" is nothing new under the sun. We see that even in Mr. Asbury's time there were brethren who were willing to be "sacrificed" on the altar of a city pastorate! This desire to be in the cities

must have distressed him very much, for on January 1, 1772, we find him saying: "I find that the preachers have their friends in the cities and care not to leave them. There is a strange party spirit. For my part, I desire to be faithful to God and man. On Thursday evening I preached my last sermon for a time on 1 Thessalonians v. 6: 'Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober.'"

What better plan can be adopted by any man in the midst of the difficulties and discouragements of life than that expressed in this entry?

*Lord's Day, 21st.*—Preached morning and evening with some life, but found that offenses increased. However, I cannot help it. My way is to go straight forward and aim at what is right.

St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, said: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." Increased opportunity invariably brings increased antagonism. Enlarged territory brings an increase in the inimical population to be exterminated. The doors of usefulness and service that open to us usher us into the presence of antagonistic and bitter forces. Oftentimes our opportunities are measured by our oppositions.

Bishop Asbury's method of sermonizing may be gathered from an entry in the *Journal* under date of Tuesday, December 23, 1771:

I preached from Acts xx. 28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves," etc. After showing to whom the charge was given, I proceeded to enforce the subject thus: I. Take heed to your spirits. II. Take heed to your practice. III. Take heed to your doctrine. IV. Take heed to the flock. 1. Those that are under deep conviction. 2. Those that are true believers. 3. Those that are sorely tempted. 4. Those that are groaning for full redemption. 5. Those that have backslidden. I then urged the motives to this duty.

Also under date of Monday, May 24, we find the following:



Sweet peace pervaded my soul, and my whole heart desired, prayed, longed, and panted to live a more spiritual life by faith in the blessed Son of God. In the evening I preached from Isaiah lxii. 6, "I have set watchmen," etc., and took occasion, first, to show that the Lord calls, authorizes, and qualifies all faithful ministers; secondly, delineated their character as watchmen; thirdly, observed that they were to keep watch on the walls; fourthly, the duties enjoined, "They shall not hold their peace," "Keep not silent." While opening this passage the Lord greatly comforted my soul. The next morning I expatiated on Canticles i. 7 and considered, first, the address: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth." Secondly, the request: "Where thou feedest." This denotes the desire of a true believer in the time of division or persecution or general declension of piety. Thirdly, the humble query: "Why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" This indicates a fear of being exposed to false teachers, who name the name of Christ but deny him in experience, doctrine, and practice. How fearful is a pious soul of turning aside as a forlorn, neglected creature, exposed to the malice and designs of devils and ungodly men! Glory to God! Notwithstanding all the assaults of Satan, my soul is preserved in peace and my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. My chief desire is to be found obedient and faithful at all times and on all occasions.

He had a passion for service. Note the following:

*Saturday, 15th.*—My body is still weak, though on the recovery. Lord, if thou shouldest be pleased to raise me up, let it be to do more good. I desire to live only for this. Lord, I am thine to serve thee forever with soul and body, time and talents. O my God! Now all I am and have is devoted to thee. Mercifully assist me by thy grace to persevere in all well-doing. Amen.

And this:

*Lord's Day, 15th.*—About to take my leave for a season, I went to the point and enlarged on these words, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain," and trust that some at least felt the worth and weight of divine truths. My subject at night in town was this: "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." In preaching from these words my mind was under some embarrassment. Perhaps my foolish heart desired to end with honor, and the Lord in mercy prevented it. May I ever be contented with that honor which cometh from God only!

Under date of July 24, 1774, Bishop Asbury makes an entry in his Journal which gives us an insight into his early religious experience which cannot be omitted from this study:

Ended the parable of the prodigal son. Does it not appear from this parable that some who, comparatively speaking, have all their lifetime endeavored to please God and are entitled to all his purchased, communicative blessings are, nevertheless, not favored with such rapturous sensations of divine joy as some others?

I remember that when I was a small boy and went to school I had serious thoughts and a particular sense of being of God and greatly feared an oath and a lie. At twelve years of age the Spirit of God strove frequently and powerfully with me; but being deprived of proper means and exposed to bad company, no effectual impressions were left on my hand. And though fond of what some call innocent diversions, I abhorred fighting and quarreling. When anything of this sort happened, I always went home displeased. But I have been much grieved to think that so many Sabbaths were idly spent which might have been better improved. However, wicked as my companions were and fond as I was of play, I never imbibed their vices. When between thirteen and fourteen years of age the Lord graciously visited my soul again. I then found myself more inclined to obey, and carefully attended preaching in West Bromwick. So I heard Stillingfleet, Bagnel, Ryland, Anderson, Mannsfield, and Talbott, men who preached the truth. I then began to watch over my inward and outward conduct. Having a desire to hear the Methodists, I went Wednesday and heard Mr. F. and Mr. I.; but I didn't understand them, though one of their subjects is fresh in my memory to this day. This was the first of my hearing the Methodists. After that another person went with me to hear them again. The text was: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." My companion was cut to the heart, but I was unmoved. The next year Mr. M. came into those parts. I was then about fifteen. Young as I was, the Spirit of God soon made deep impressions on my heart, which brought me to Jesus Christ, who graciously justified my guilty soul through faith in his precious blood and soon showed me the excellency and necessity of holiness.

When about sixteen I experienced a marvelous display of the grace of God, which some might think was full sanctification, and was indeed very happy, though in an ungodly family. At about seventeen I began to hold some public meetings, and between seven-

teen and eighteen began to exhort and preach. When about twenty-one I went through Staffordshire and Gloucestershire in the place of a traveling preacher, and the next year through Bedfordshire, Sussex, etc. In 1769 I was appointed assistant in Northamptonshire, and the next year traveled in Wiltshire. On September 13, 1771, I embarked for America, and for my own private satisfaction began to keep an imperfect journal.

He had a deep conviction of the necessity of spiritual religion and of the peril of mere profession.

*Wednesday, 10th.*—My frame is much afflicted. But it is worse to be afflicted in mind by the misconduct of professors. It grieves me much to see the deceit of a few persons who have crept in amongst us. It is a thousand pities that such whose hearts are not right with God should ever thrust themselves in amongst the people of God. They are too apt to make all they are connected with as a rope of sand. I clearly see that professors who are rotten at heart are a hindrance and a curse to the rest. May the Lord thoroughly purge his floor! I was very low, but met my class and preached in the evening. There appeared to be but little depth of religion in the class. It is a great folly to take people into society before they know what they are about. What some people take for religion and spiritual life is nothing but the power of the natural passions. It is true that real religion cannot exist without peace and love and joy. But, then, real religion is real holiness, and all sensations without a strong disposition for holiness are but delusive.

Even a bishop can forget his sermon. Read this:

*Lord's Day, 18th.*—Losing some of my ideas in preaching, I was ashamed of myself and pained to see the people waiting to hear what the blunderer had to say. May these things humble me and show me where my great strength lieth!

How comforting to lesser lights!

Asbury's perpetual and consuming passion was for spirituality. Hear him:

*Monday, 26th.*—My soul is sweetly drawn out after God and satisfied with him as a sufficient portion. But O how I long to be more spiritual!

“Come and possess me whole,  
 Nor hence again remove;  
 Settle and fix my wav’ring soul  
 With all thy weight of love.”

And again:

*Lord’s Day, 30th.*—I kept closed house till evening, and O what happiness my soul enjoyed with God! So open and delightful was the intercourse between God and my soul that it gave me grief if any person came into my room to disturb my sweet communion with the blessed Father and the Son. When my work is done, may I enter into the fullness of the joy which shall never be interrupted in the blissful realms above!

And still another:

*Thursday, 16th.*—My mind has been kept in great peace, but I am somewhat troubled on account of my defects in usefulness and spirituality. May the Lord make me more serious and more spiritual in all my internal and external actions! And though my mind was much taken up with God on Friday, yet I was too free in conversation. My earnest desire is to have full power over every thought, word, and action.

The good Bishop ever had a keen sense of the danger of sin.

*Friday, June 2.*—The Lord is pleased to show me the danger which a preacher is in of being lifted up by pride and falling into the condemnation of the devil. How great is the danger of this! A considerable degree of ballast is necessary to bear frequent and sudden puffs of applause. Lord, fill me with genuine humility, that the strongest gusts from Satan or the world may never move me.

Here is a New-Year resolution:

*Monday, January 1, 1776.*—I am entering on a new year and am of late constantly happy, feeling my heart much taken up with God, and hope thus to live and thus to die. Or if there should be any alteration, may it be for the better and not for the worse!

“My residue of days or hours  
 Thine, wholly thine, shall be,  
 And all my consecrated powers  
 A sacrifice to thee,

Till Jesus in the clouds appear  
 To saints on earth forgiven,  
 And bring the great Sabbath year,  
 The jubilee of heaven."

And here is a scene from the sunset:

*Sabbath, 21st.*—I ordained the deacons and preached a sermon in which Dr. Coke was remembered. My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop McKendree. I will take away my feet. It is my fifty-fifth year of ministry and forty-fifth year of labor in America. My mind enjoys great peace and divine consolation. My health is better, which may in part be because of my being less deeply interested in the business of the Conferences. But whether health, life, or death, good is the will of the Lord. I will trust him; yea, and will praise him. He is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Glory! glory! glory!

#### QUESTIONS.

1. Who is the most eminent figure in American Methodism?
2. What characterized Mr. Asbury from the very beginning of his ministry?
3. What crisis in American Methodism followed the close of the Revolutionary War?
4. When and where was the Christmas Conference held?
5. What of the personal character of Bishop Asbury?
6. What motive actuated Asbury in his coming to America?
7. Upon what was he determined from the very beginning?
8. What was his usual method in the face of difficulties?
9. What evidence of deep spirituality?
10. What evidence that he had a passion for service?

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CHAPTER XII.  
MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.





## CHAPTER XII.

### MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.

THE little excursions into the field of Methodist literature, made at spare moments snatched from a busy pastorate, have been personally charming and inspiring. In fact, the work has amounted to a fascination. But the most enticing enterprise must have a conclusion. There are many books, however, that could not properly be brought under any of the previous classifications, but which, nevertheless, are most eminently worthy of our study.

#### *Books of Travel.*

*Stephen Olin's "Travels."*—This remarkable man has come before us in previous studies—in the study of "Methodist Oratory" and the one on "Methodist Metaphysicians." Now he is before us in another aspect. But Stephen Olin was one of the most remarkable men ever produced by our Church. While connected with Randolph-Macon the health of Dr. Olin became impaired and he sought restoration by a trip to Europe. As a result of his trip we have his "Travels," a most charming work. The following from a discriminating notice in one of the periodicals of the day when the work appeared indicates the excellencies of the production:

We are glad to see a third edition of this valuable work announced. We formed a high estimate of it upon its first appearance, and are happy to find our judgment confirmed by its extensive sale. In many respects it is the best book for general readers that has yet appeared in regard to the countries of which it treats. This is eminently true of Dr. Olin's account of Egypt. He certainly occupied his time to the best advantage on the Nile; and he has not only given a very clear account of the remains of antiquity which line the banks of that river, but has also brought an account of information in regard to the policy of Mohammed Ali and the pres-

ent condition of the country that can be found in no single treatise that we know of in the language. His account of Petra, too, is superior to any work that is accessible to common readers. Laborde's elaborate book has not been republished in this country. Mr. Stephen's graphic narration does not profess to give any accurate details. Dr. Robinson was very industrious during his visit to Petra, and has recorded what he saw with his usual fidelity. But his stay was too short to allow of any extensive observations. Dr. Olin remained three days without any molestation, and he has recorded the results of his investigation with great perspicuity. We have followed him, indeed, throughout his tour with wonder at the activity and zeal with which, invalid as he is, he prosecuted his researches. Few men could see so much in the same time, and fewer still could describe it so well.

*Marvin's "To the East by Way of the West."*—The General Conference of 1874 requested that one of the bishops visit China in the interest of our missionary work there. Bishop Marvin was selected for this important task. Dr. Thomas O. Summers was then President of our Board of Missions and heartily approved of the suggestion that the good Bishop extend his visit in the East, visit the various missionary societies in other parts of the world, and attend the session of the British Conference in order to represent the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, before that venerable body. In accordance with the request of Dr. Summers, Bishop Marvin furnished a letter every week of his travels, which appeared regularly in the successive issues of the *Christian Advocate* (Nashville). Bishop Marvin's unusually clear perception, sound judgment, poetic and imaginative powers, great energy, and invincible zeal for the cause of Christ enabled him to produce a really remarkable book. In the Introduction Dr. Summers says:

The benefit conferred upon the Church by this missionary tour, thus faithfully and picturesquely reported, is incalculable. It has made the pulse of the Church beat higher. It has enlarged our view of the mission field and suggested plans for its cultivation. It has greatly strengthened the hands and comforted the hearts of our

little band of missionaries in China and those of other Churches in the lands visited by him, and the publication of his letters will do much to fan the flame of missionary zeal in the widespread connection of which he was so bright an ornament and in which he labored with so much zeal and success.

In one of the letters written from China Bishop Marvin says:

For myself, I believe I never felt the grandeur of the kingdom of God so fully before. It is just now collecting its energies for the final campaign in the conquest of the world. The advance lines of the all-conquering host fronts the enemy where he is massed in his greatest strength and entrenched in his most formidable defenses. The powers of darkness are enthroned; but the God of light already advances upon them, and they begin to be aware of the glory of his approach. No human destiny can be greater than that of participating in the labors and dangers of the deepening combat. It may involve martyrdom—I doubt not it will—but that blood which is shed for Christ is most precious in his sight. O Son of God, is it not a joy to die for thee?

Galloway's "*A Circuit of the Globe.*"—In a brief introductory note to this book a writer who attaches the initial "E." says:

Some books need an introduction, and some do not. This one belongs to the latter class. On its own merits it is sure to have a wide circulation. The letters of which it is substantially made up were written by Bishop Galloway to the *Christian Advocate* during his recent journey around the world, and they were hailed with delight by thousands of readers. No worthier series of communications has ever occurred in the columns of that paper. How my good friend managed to keep up so high a level of thought and style amid all the difficulties and dissipations of almost incessant traveling is a marvel to me. For fullness, for accuracy, for vivacity, he has few equals. I do not know half a dozen men who are so entertaining as he is with both pen and tongue. The demand for the publication of his letters in book form is widespread and earnest. I feel sure that the volume will have a great run. While it cannot fail to be stimulating and instructive in many ways, it will especially aid in developing an increased interest in the great cause of Christian missions.

Here is the closing paragraph of this delightful book:

I am profoundly grateful for the care of a gracious Providence who has preserved me from danger and death through more than thirty thousand miles of journeying by land and sea. I return from my circuit of the globe with a stronger faith in the all-conquering gospel, with brighter hopes for the extension of our Lord's kingdom in all the world, with a higher appreciation of the missionaries who have devoted their lives to the uplifting of the nations, and with a larger love for true Christians of every name and creed. May our Lord speed the glorious morning when we shall all be one as he and the Father are one!

*"Travels in Three Continents"* is a most readable work by Rev. Dr. James M. Buckley and consists of the author's graphic narrative of his travels in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

*"Etchings of the East"* is a delightful book by Rev. Dr. John M. Moore and consists of the series of letters written by him during his visit to the Orient.

#### *Books of Controversy.*

*Fletcher's "Appeal."*—When the Countess of Huntington established her theological seminary at Trevecca, in Wales, for the purpose of training pious young men for the ministry, Mr. Fletcher was called to the presidency of the institution; and upon the recommendation of Mr. Wesley, Rev. Joseph Benson was elected second master. As might be expected, these men gave precedence to spiritual rather than philosophical or theological instruction. At length religious dissensions began to be fostered among the patrons of the school.

The Countess was a Methodist of the Whitefield school and believed in predestination. Her chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Shirley, her own brother, was an ardent predestinarian. About this time there was much controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians. Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Benson were advisers of Wesley's course against the Calvinists. Accordingly Mr. Benson was soon dismissed from the

seminary for refusing to indorse Calvinism, and Mr. Fletcher's resignation as President immediately followed.

Lady Huntington's chaplain and brother took offense at the Wesleyan "Minutes of Conference" and issued a "Circular Letter" to the evangelical clergymen of England, protesting against the doctrines of Arminianism and inviting the clergymen to attend in a body the Wesleyan Conference and demand a renunciation of the offensive tenets. They were refused an audience by Mr. Wesley unless they came as friends and not as belligerents.

The occasion, however, called out a new element of Mr. Fletcher's character. Hitherto he had been known as the pious and earnest pastor or the scholarly and dignified president of the seminary. He now comes out as a polemic. As soon as he received Mr. Shirley's "Circular Letter" he began to prepare his "Checks to Antinomianism," a work which reflected great credit upon the head and the heart of the writer. In speaking of the book Mr. Wesley says: "How much good has been accomplished by the publication of that 'Circular Letter'! This was the happy occasion of Mr. Fletcher's writing those 'Checks to Antinomianism,' in which one knows not which to admire most, the *purity* of the language (such as scarce any foreigner ever wrote before), the *strength* and *clearness* of the argument, or the *mildness* and *sweetness* of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole."

*Foster's "Objections to Calvinism."*—In the earlier days of Methodism the battle royal was the conflict between Arminianism and Calvinism. The itinerants were too busy preaching the doctrines to have any time for writing. But occasionally some one snatched time enough from pressing duties to put his convictions in literary form. A very popular production appearing about the middle of the last century, and which had quite a large sale, was Foster's "Objections to Calvinism." In the first chapter the author says:

This book is a creature of circumstance. It had never existed but for reasons over which the author himself had no control. He wrote because it seemed necessary to write, not because he had any ambition for authorship. He made a book, not with "intention aforethought," but almost before he was aware of it and without any pretense whatever. The Church of which he is a humble and obscure minister had been long and grievously assailed by the principal organ of a sister denomination—her doctrines and usages held up to public odium as perverted by the pen of misrepresentation, her influence for piety questioned, and whatever was peculiar to her organization ridiculed and calumniated.

The book is valuable as a literary landmark and as a condensed presentation of the Arminian side of the issue.

*Brownlow's "Great Iron Wheel Examined."*—Here we have a real literary curiosity. The book was written at a time when the controversial spirit was at high tide. The Rev. J. R. Graves, editor of the *Tennessee Baptist*, had made a very bitter attack upon the Methodist itinerancy, and this book is a reply. In the Preface Mr. Brownlow says:

The author of this book does not feel it incumbent upon him to offer an apology for writing this defense of the personal integrity and respectability of Methodist preachers and of the polity and doctrines of Methodism. He has prepared this book because he believed it called for, as a set-off to the "star papers" of unmitigated abuse and calumny ostentatiously paraded in a book of five hundred and seventy pages by the notorious J. R. Graves, editor of the *Tennessee Baptist*, at Nashville, and which are now receiving the praises of the irreligious, vindictive, and more indiscreet partisans of that respectable and numerous denomination of Christians.

The book is not a model for present-day polemics, but is an interesting relic of the spirit of controversy that prevailed in the days of its production.

*Boland's "Problem of Methodism."*—The doctrine of sanctification has ever been one of the most fertile fields of controversy. A few years ago it received a great deal of attention throughout our Church. One of the most interesting productions during the period is the book under review.

This is said with the distinct understanding that many things in the book are not accepted by the reviewer. The full title of the book is: "The Problem of Methodism: Being a Review of the Residue Theory of Regeneration and the Second Change Theory of Sanctification; and the Philosophy of Christian Perfection." The main feature of the book is its tendency to check the extremist who would either minimize or eliminate the work of regeneration.

*Unclassified.*

*Candler's "High Living and High Lives."*—This book contains some of the best thought of one of the most vigorous thinkers in Methodism. It consists of addresses delivered by Bishop Candler while he was President of Emory College. The first part of the book contains "Exhortations to High Living," while the second part contains "Some High Lives." The third part deals with "The Education for High Living." In the Prefatory Note, which is addressed to Prof. H. S. Bradley, Emory College, Oxford, Ga., the good Bishop says:

The best days I have lived were those days at Oxford when I did what I could to promote such culture, and one of the highest joys I now have is the fact that so many of the sons of Emory illustrate the high living to which I tried to point them. All around the world to-day they are trying to serve their generation according to the will of God. Some have fallen on sleep, having wrought well.

*Carlisle's "Addresses."*—A book of similar import and character is the one containing the "Addresses" of Dr. James H. Carlisle. The volume is edited by Mr. James H. Carlisle, Jr., and is dedicated to "the students and alumni of Wofford College, whom he loved so well." This volume, however, contains only one of the addresses delivered by Dr. Carlisle to the students of Wofford. The editor of the book selected addresses made upon various occasions, from the graduating speech at the South Carolina College Decem-

ber 2, 1844, to the address delivered before the graduating class of Wofford College June 5, 1904. While the volume before us contains many addresses of purely local interest, yet it will be of perpetual interest to those who knew the peerless James H. Carlisle.

*Arthur's "The Tongue of Fire."*—Here is a book that cannot be ignored by people who aspire to the highest attainments in experience and efficiency. In the Preface the author says:

The following pages are the fruit of meditations entered upon with the desire to lessen the distance painfully felt to exist between my own life and that of the primitive Christians. This fact may, in some measure, account for the plan of the work. Many topics which would have been fully discussed in a treatise on the work of the Holy Spirit or on the character and usages of the primitive Christians are passed by or very slightly touched, while some others have greater prominence than would have been given them in such a work.

The table of contents shows the following: "The Promise of the Baptism of Fire," "The Waiting for the Fulfillment," "The Fulfillment of the Promise," "The Effects Which Immediately Followed the Baptism of Fire," "Permanent Benefits Resulting to the Church," and "Practical Lessons."

*Teff's "Methodism Successful."*—This book deals with internal causes that produced the marvelous success of early Methodism. The Introduction was written by Bishop Janes. It is a most readable volume and is a valuable contribution to the literature on Methodism.

*Lee's "Making of a Man."*—This excellent book by Rev. Dr. James W. Lee has not had the wide circulation and study that its merits justify, though the circulation has been extensive. It is a book, not for the casual reader, but the student.

Dr. Lee's great book, "The Religion of Science," has just come from the press. It will be one of the epoch-making books of the Christian era.



This chapter must not close without mention of these: Edwards's "The Log Meetinghouse," Keener's "Post Oak Circuit," Caughey's "Methodism in Earnest," Cross's "Pisgah View of the Promised Inheritance," Hudson's "The Methodist Armor," Arthur's "Addresses," Anderson's "The Bible Christian," and Bishop Fitzgerald's "Writings."

#### QUESTIONS.

1. What are some of the contributions of Methodist writers to the literature of travel?
2. What are the literary traits of Bishop Marvin?
3. Who wrote "Travels in Three Continents"?
4. What gave rise to Fletcher's "Appeal"?
5. What does the author say of "Objections to Calvinism"?
6. What is the chief value of Brownlow's "Great Iron Wheel Examined"?
7. What is the issue in Boland's "Problem of Methodism"?
8. Who wrote "High Living and High Lives"?
9. Of what does Arthur's "Tongue of Fire" treat?
10. For whom especially was Lee's "Making of a Man" written?

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- Olin's "Travels."  
 Marvin's "To the East by Way of the West."  
 Galloway's "Circuit of the Globe."  
 Buckley's "Travels in Three Continents."  
 Moore's "Etchings of the East."  
 Fletcher's "Appeal."  
 Foster's "Objections to Calvinism."  
 Brownlow's "Great Iron Wheel Examined."  
 Arthur's "Tongue of Fire."









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